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THE THIRST FOR GOLD.

CHAPTER I.

“ Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil,
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content.
And O ! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile !
Then howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire.”

BURNS.

FROM century to century, the names of Tell and Liberty have been handed down in conjunction, by poets and historians, as themes for veneration ; and Switzerland preserved for generations the respect she won from European nations by her early and triumphant struggles with Feudal despotism. But strangers in the meanwhile knew little of her institutions, or

the internal history of her petty states. Nations and individuals had elsewhere too much occupation in struggling for pre-eminence, and defending it when acquired, to take heed of a country, whose wild fastnesses and humble chalets possessed neither the attractions of luxury, nor the prospect of gain.

The battles of the Swiss with Burgundy, Austria, and Savoy, had early given indisputable evidence of their valour, and their gallant deeds in the service of France and Rome during many subsequent wars, whilst they maintained their fame as the bravest soldiers in Europe, proved that their love of gold equalled, if not surpassed their devotion to the land of their nativity.

No one enquired concerning the effect of the wealth acquired during this mercenary service, upon the morals of an uneducated people ; no one considered whilst they vaunted the virtuous simplicity of these hardy mountaineers, that where knowledge is defective the vices of small

they were attached, whilst public offices were everywhere made a source of gain to the privileged few, and justice was notoriously bought and sold.

In fact the Swiss towards the end of the eighteenth century were neither much better, nor worse than the surrounding nations; less expensive—but as fond of gold; less enlightened—but in their towns equally corrupt; without a monarch, but as prone as acknowledged despots, to pervert authority to tyranny, and subjection to slavery.

Neither the works of Voltaire, nor Rousseau, produced much general effect upon the political feelings of these republicans, and beyond the confines of Geneva little interest was for some time excited even by the great political convulsion that shook the French monarchy from its foundations. Though eleven regiments of their countrymen, in the service of France, were massacred almost to a man, they perished un-

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Cantons, and in March 1798, presumed to dictate a new constitution to the whole of Switzerland. The indignation and amazement of the Burghers, was great when they heard of the arbitrary overthrow of their ancient government, and they protested by a strong memorial against such an outrage on their liberties. But the wisest placed little reliance on obtaining redress by words, and the principal inhabitants of Lucerne and Schwytz, when they heard of the ravages committed by the French army under the command of Brune and Schauenberg at Berne, and the surrounding country, were silently convinced that they likewise would finally be compelled to have recourse to arms in defence of their properties—their lives—and the ancient institutions which were as dear to them as either.

But even long after such feelings disturbed the chief towns of the Waldstetten, the mountains around the lake retained all their primitive tranquillity. The huntsmen went to the

chase, without ever dreaming that hostile armies would ere long tread the rocks and glaciers where they could scarcely find a footing; the shepherds drove their cattle to the upper pastures, without a fear of approaching war, and though the pilgrims who toiled up the steep ascents of the mountains of the Righi, to pay their adoration to "our lady of the snow," at the little chapel of the Capuchin Hospital near its summit, occasionally brought reports to the holy monks who dwelt there, of distant disturbances, for a long time very little attention was paid to the narratives. These men firmly believed that neither war, nor revolution could ever penetrate to the profound seclusion of their lonely dwelling place, which at an elevation of five thousand feet was rendered inaccessible by the snows for more than six months of the year.

But there was one man who dwelt upon that mountain, in apparently yet deeper seclusion, who was well aware of the storms by which his

country was threatened. Though few ever approached the lonely cavern where he abode near the summit of the Righi, Father Paul Styger, the Hermit of the waterfall, was well known to all the shepherds of the Alps. His very name was regarded with veneration by his simple neighbours, and whenever he descended into the valleys, respect almost amounting to adoration, attended his footsteps.

Men knew nothing more of his history than that for nearly a quarter of a century he had inhabited the cave in which he still dwelt, and that though he never worked, he sought no charity, and held little communication with any but one family on the mountain, or those to whom his services were needful. Some said that, when the snows rendered his cavern inaccessible, he travelled to other lands but none knew the truth of this supposition, for no sooner had the first tufts of green appeared with the sunshine and the showers of returning spring, than he was to be seen by the shepherds

as they drove their flocks to the upper pastures, sitting on the same fragment of rock he had frequented for years, though occasionally in the height of summer he was invisible for weeks together.

The fine person of this eccentric man, contributed in no small degree to enhance the mysterious reverence in which he was held. The only thing in which his dress differed from that of a Capuchin friar, was the broad brimmed beaver hat which he habitually wore when he rambled to any distance from his cave, but the brown frock loosely knotted around his waist with a cord, could not conceal the muscular proportions of his tall athletic figure, which, though he was verging on sixty, had in consequence of his simple mode of life, retained all its early vigour. His regular features, and long flowing beard, bore a great resemblance to those busts bequeathed to us by the sculptors of antiquity as a likeness of Plato. Grey hairs were rapidly mingling with the dark circle the

tonsure had left around his lofty head, yet his large black eyes were bright and piercing ; often flashing with an uncertain light, that betrayed a wild and enthusiastic imagination, and a morbid excess of feeling which age had not subdued, and which at times, the powerful intellect of this extraordinary being with difficulty restrained within the bounds of reason.

It was this part of his character which had compelled him to seek seclusion, for though his talents might have won for him a high place amidst society, yet his feelings were little adapted to struggle successfully with the trials of active life ; he had been disappointed in his affections, and his early dreams of human perfectability ; the phantom land of youth had been explored and found wanting, till taught by experience the imperfection of all earthly things, he sought tranquillity by raising his thoughts to heaven, and contemplating with adoration there, that eternal and unchanging beauty whose type was in his soul. Thus he found

peace, and next to his commune with the Deity, his greatest happiness was in endeavouring to communicate that peace to others.

Well known to the monks at the Hospital, he frequently assisted them in their charitable labours and the celebration of divine worship, but the person who most employed his care, was the son of a neighbouring shepherdess, a youth called Walther Stanz.

His father once a cowherd on the Righi, had been killed many years before by a falling mass of rock, and the boy left to the sole care of his widowed mother, had early engaged the attention of the Hermit. Though excluded by his humble birth from the free class of the Canton of Schwytz to which he belonged, the old man found him endowed with one of those noble and expansive minds, rarely bestowed by the just hand of providence, either on the high or the lowly.

Even at fifteen he seemed altogether of a different nature from the other simple inhabi-

tants of the mountain, ever seeking instruction and profiting with marvellous intelligence, by all the lessons of Father Paul. When the long dark winter evenings made an end of rural labour, and others were engaged around their cottage stoves, in games of chance or idle sport, he eagerly devoured the contents of every book he could obtain, or listened to those who would recount to him stories of the past wars, and noble achievements of his nation. The chase, that mimicry of war, was the only pastime he loved, and when he followed the chamois amidst the peaks of the mighty Alps, and battled with the mountain breeze, his young heart bounded with the inexpressible delight of conscious power and freedom. But at all times his thoughts were far beyond his years and station, and of such a character, that undisciplined, or ill directed, they must inevitably have proved the source of unbounded misery to himself, or others. Though devotedly attached to his country,

as he advanced to manhood his thoughts soared far beyond it. Father Paul had procured him an engagement as a sort of secretary to the monk, who managed the affairs of the Hospital, but this employment was little adapted to his aspiring and restless mind, and he was only withheld by his mother's need of his services, and his reluctance to give offence to the Hermit, from seeking an exercise for his hitherto aimless energies, in the service of some foreign potentate.

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The influence of Paul Styger was in fact of infinite benefit to this young man, at a time when his character was daily developing, and he stood as it were half bewildered on the brink of knowledge. But the priest very wisely did not burthen his pupil's mind with the learning of science; he knew that such knowledge would have no influence in subduing his impetuous passions, and training him to virtue, but in their brief opportunities for study, he placed

before him the noblest examples of ancient and modern worth for imitation, and ever strove by his own discourse to elevate his tone of religious and moral feeling. He saw that in the false position his birth had assigned him, in a country where genius was at best a worthless possession, a well disciplined mind afforded his only chance of happiness, and often did he sigh when he listened to the wild outpourings of the young man's ardent hopes, and remembered his own youth, and the storms of feeling he had struggled through, ere he had won the haven of peace.

Thoughts like these were passing in his mind, as he sat with Walther Stanz on a broken mass of rock near the summit of the Righi on one of those gladdening and bright April days, which sometimes appear all loveliness and glory, to come like heavenly messengers of the approaching summer. On one side beneath them lay the Hospital and its little pointed roofed chapel, embosomed in a cleft of the mountain,

like a bird within its nest; pastures, still partly covered with the silver mantle of winter, occasionally varied by a broken mass of rock or a dark pine tree, stretched in varied slopes beyond, solitary and cheerless, but for the sunbeams, that were rapidly reviving the still half frozen blossoms. Far away to the east, fitfully veiled by moving vapours, extended in huge disorder the snowy summits of the eastern Alps, whilst immediately in front of them, the mountain clothed with wood, sunk almost precipitately beneath their feet, and at its base lay the lake of Waldstetten, and the banks where every step was hallowed by the remembrance of Tell and his immortal comrades. The city of Lucerne rising at the western extremity of its placid waters, with all its antique towers, and churches, and fortifications, seemed but a speck in the landscape, as the eye wandered on to the lofty heights of Mount Pilate, and the boundless expanse of country to the west, where hills and valleys and lakes were levelled by distance

into one vast plain, that seemed afar off to melt into the sky.

“Day after day I can unwearied gaze upon this glorious prospect,” said Father Paul, at length turning to his silent companion; “from no other spot can the eye behold so many scenes made sacred by the deeds of our ancestors. See there, at the head of the Lake of Zug, lies Morgarton, where the progenitor of Aloys Reding of Schwytz won a signal victory over the Austrians; there Sempach, where seventy years later, Arnold de Winkelried annihilated those who came to seek revenge; there Kusnacht, where Gessler perished by the hand of Tell, and every breeze that comes hither from the upper lake, seems fraught with that great man’s glory. It is a noble privilege to dwell in such a land, and forget the chicanery and petty wiles, with which our fellow creatures struggle for gold in more civilized regions.”

“It gives me rather pain than pleasure,”

returned the youth without raising his head from the hand on which it rested, "for it reminds me of what I might have been in such times, and what I am!"

"Remember Walther, before you give way to these repinings," said the priest gravely, "what the men were, who did these gallant deeds. Not idle visionaries, sick of their self-consciousness; not dreamers who shrunk from their allotted task of daily toil, who loathed reality and embittered the present by vain thoughts of the future. They sought no glory—they were simple, patient and industrious; drawing the sword when duty commanded them, and when their warlike task was done returning contented to obscurity. The greatest exploits make only a transient portion of any man's life, but their devoted love of their country, and their attachment to their homes and families, in which lay all their strength, grew up unconsciously amidst their daily toil."

"But I am even denied these blessings,"

answered the young man sadly, "the son of a bondman I am scarcely acknowledged by my country, and oh! Father Paul, you must know as well as I, that it is my fate to live for ever alone!"

"Nay," returned the Hermit smiling, "this is a new cause for complaint, not coming within my province to decide on; but methinks Walther, this grief, too, is like the vapours of the morning on yonder valley, a meridian sun never fails to disperse."

"There is no brightness awaiting for me," was the reply, "am I not a bondman, a slave, with whom the daughters of freemen would scorn to match. Yes, Father Paul, you who have taught me so much, know how my heart shrinks from many with whom it is my lot to associate, and feel as I do, that amongst the women of my own class, I can find none to love."

"Not if your heart is already given to one of higher breeding," answered the Hermit.

“ Ah Walther, how can you expect me to be a just counsellor if you tell me only half your cause? But I know your secret! I have long known it, and if I had not, I should have divined it from your discontent. You are in love with Justine Weber!”

“ Love her, Father Paul!” exclaimed Walther with a crimson cheek, and flashing eye, “ love is a feeble word for the feelings that are driving me almost to madness! and yet it is too presumptuous in a wretch like me, to say I dare to love her! had you not spoken the word, even to you, I would not have betrayed my folly.”

“ Have you then said nothing to the maiden herself?” inquired the old man.

“ No—no—no—I am not so vain! though I talk so wildly, I have no hope! none upon earth!”

“ Yet without hope love dies men say,” returned the hermit, gazing with sorrow on the agitated features of his companion, whose

abrupt movements betrayed even more than his words, the violence of the feelings he struggled to restrain.

“Not love like mine!” he abruptly cried, “those who assert it, never felt the passion. Since first I worshipped her, no ray of hope has ever gleamed upon my wretched heart. Yet ask yourself, oh, Father Paul you once were young, and with a mind like yours, you must like me have loved! ask yourself if it be possible daily to see so fair a creature, daily to feel that humble as I am, her young, pure, guileless heart still trusts me as in childhood, and yet forbear to love! Ah, it was a sad day for me, when her rich uncle Michael Graaf, sent her to be brought up on the mountain.”

“Absence, perhaps might prove a better remedy than such society,” said the old man.

“I have tried that too,” rejoined his companion sadly, “but without success; it may obliterate mere passing fancies, but to me it

brought no change. On the lonely hills I shaped the mists of the morning into her form, and I saw her like a spirit amidst the evening clouds ; her voice was ever in my ears—but this is madness, utter madness, I should reveal to no man. I fear Father Paul you will repent the labour you have bestowed on such a worthless pupil ; but nature will break forth.”

“ I rejoice that you have disclosed these feelings,” answered the Hermit kindly, taking the hand of the young man in his. “ You were right in conjecturing that I have felt too much myself, not to sympathize with the feelings of others. A pent up fire, ever burns most intensely, and anguish is redoubled by concealment. I know it is vain to discourage your love, yet I can see no hope of its prospering. Michael Graaf the maiden’s only surviving relative, sets a great value both on wealth and birth. He is sprung from an ancient family, however unworthy of his

ancestors, and is the Treasurer, as well as one of the richest Burghers of Lucerne. I marvel he has never heard of your intimacy with his niece !”

“ I am too humble in every way,” said the mountaineer bitterly, “ for him even to dream of my measureless presumption, or to have any fear that Justine would so misplace her affections. Moreover,” he continued in a low and hurried voice, “ her uncle has decided that she is to marry Carl Staffer.”

“ What, the farmer of Meggen ?”

“ The same ; he has the largest tracts of land of any man in the Canton !”

“ I know him well by reputation,” said Father Paul, “ and have always heard, he was a coarse, good-looking, selfish blockhead ; a very unfit husband for such a girl as Justine. But who comes here,” he added abruptly interrupting himself, as a figure suddenly appeared from behind the buildings of the Hospital, and began to ascend towards them. “ Your young

eyes are clearer than mine," he said after he had taken a brief survey of the stranger, who with considerable agility was scaling the precipice, "tell me if you recognize him, for methinks it is Aloys Reding."

"It may be, for he has the air of a soldier; but you forget, I know him not;" answered Walther, and with considerable curiosity he continued attentively to watch the movements of the unknown, for in that unfrequented solitude the appearance even of a passing traveller, was a subject of interest.

CHAPTER II.

" Such harmony in motion, speech, and air,
Though fair the maiden, she was more than fair;
Had more than beauty in each speaking grace,
That lent their cloudless beauty to the face."

CRABBE'S TALES.

THE dress of the man who thus unexpectedly ascended to the resting place of the Hermit and his pupil, was superior to that of the ordinary inhabitants of the country, and though very simple had a certain military character. He was probably near fifty, but tall and athletic, his elastic steps and graceful, though careless carriage, made him appear much younger, and ere he had spoken a word, the frank expression of his plain but intelligent

countenance, prepossessed the young mountaineer in his favour.

“Ha ! Aloys Reding !” exclaimed the Hermit the instant he distinctly recognised his early friend, “what has brought you hither to-day?”

“Idleness,” replied the soldier, “I was at Goldau on business, and as I could not think of being so near, and yet return to Schwytz without seeing you, I determined to cross the mountain and go home by the Lake.”

Walther well knew that Aloys Reding, a retired Spanish officer, though a native of Schwytz, and since his return from abroad, one of its most influential inhabitants, had been in early life the chosen friend of Father Paul, and now was largely in his confidence. Feeling therefore that his presence was uncalled for, he glided away unperceived, and returned to his usual labours in the Hospital.

“I went to your cavern in search of you,” continued the officer, when they were thus left alone, “but you were wise to leave that gloomy

den, and come forth to look nature in the face this glorious day. I have been long wishing to talk to you on a subject, that sometimes disturbs my mind, so I will take a seat on this stone at your side."

"Is there any further news of the French movements?" demanded the Hermit anxiously.

"Nothing important," was the reply; "but I have received a private hint, that Michael Graaf is in correspondence with them."

"Can the fellow have taken a bribe?" inquired Father Paul.

"It is probable enough," was the reply, "for though he was my own sister's husband, I have the worst opinion of him. In fact it was on that very subject I came hither to converse with you. He pretended to marry poor Clarice for love, but even when I first went to Milan, soon after she disappeared, there were strange stories afloat about her death, yet so vague and confused that fearful thoughts have sometimes come into my mind. I never talked

to you on these matters, Father Paul, for I saw you liked not to speak of the past, but since my return home, they have continually haunted me. I felt it was my duty to inquire further, and during the past week I have been again to Milan."

"And what did you discover there?" inquired the Hermit.

"I gained little fresh intelligence," said Reding; "what I learnt however has decided me to investigate this matter further, and confirmed all the rumours I had previously heard, that Clarice left a child, yet none seem even to suspect in Lucerne that Graaf ever had a wife, and he is now alone; but though by our father's will, I am heir to my sister's portion which was considerable for her station, he persists in refusing to repay it me."

"You should enforce your rights," said the Hermit coolly.

"He defies me to prove either his marriage,

the death of Clarice, or that she died childless," was the reply.

"Have you met him face to face?" enquired Father Paul.

"I never saw him in my life, and it is many years since any communication took place between us. I obtained a certificate of my sister's marriage when I visited Milan soon after Michael left it. It was given me by Louis Brentano—"

"Ha! did you know that Priest?" demanded the Hermit suddenly interrupting him with an agitation of manner that greatly surprised his companion.

"He was my sister's confessor," was the reply, "and married her to Michael Graaf. This he acknowledged, but though he pretended ignorance of all besides, there was a strange confusion in his manner when I questioned him as to the ultimate fate of Clarice. He insinuated that she had quitted her hus-

band, but whether by her own consent, or not, I failed to discover. I had then no leisure to sift this matter further. Time passed on, and in the hurry of active service, it rarely recurred to my mind. But since I have returned to Schwytz, a solitary man to end my days in seclusion, I feel I have been to blame, and though I care little for Clarice's portion, I am determined to clear her character from the slanders that have penetrated even to these remote districts. She was too pure, too angelic a being, for any guilty passion to have led her astray. But surely Father Paul you were at Milan in those days, can you give me no light in this matter?"

"I heard reports, as you have done," said the Hermit, though without lifting his eyes to the face of his friend, "but I knew the virtues of your sister too well, to heed aught that the world might say to her disadvantage. If these slanders are not forgotten yet, they soon will be, and as your friend, Aloys Reding, I advise

you to let matters rest, if your only motive is to dispel them. If you claim the portion it is different. You have not yet spoken with Michael Graaf on that point, I think you said?"

"I waited for further information," replied the soldier, "but my agents at Milan have hitherto failed in all their researches, for Louis Brentano has forsaken his monastery, and is nowhere to be heard of. This being the case, I will seize the first opportunity to call Graaf to account. When young he was a coward, and I warrant that wealth has not made him more courageous; I will accost him abruptly, and from his manner when thus taken unawares, read the truth of my suspicions. I fear there has been sad foul play somewhere, and though I have been hitherto baffled in my search, I am bent on bringing it to light."

"I fear you will find it very difficult to prove anything against this man," answered Father Paul, and the tone was bitterly sarcastic in which he continued, "I cannot deny he is well

known to be very fond of money, but saving that fault, and which of us is perfect, he is commonly considered a good-hearted fellow, and is so well thought of by those in office, that he is now Treasurer of Lucerne."

"Then St. Dunstan guard their gold," said Reding in a gayer tone, "for his fingers will itch to handle it; and mark my words Paul, good-nature is the worst part about him; for it would put St. Anthony off his guard, and hath cozened many a fool—whilst a knave picked his pocket."

"I grant he may be cunning, but that affords no ground for suspecting him of murder!" persisted Styger.

"I spoke not of murder," returned the soldier impetuously, "yet I have seen strange scenes in my time, and I have come to this conclusion, that when a man in the pursuit of gain deliberately carries fraud as far as law permits with safety, I am ready to believe, that no scruples would deter him from the greatest

crimes, if his neck were not placed in jeopardy. Those who have had dealings with Michael in Milan, say that in former days his conscience like an easy doublet, sat very loosely on him."

"But murder Aloys! it is a fearful thing, and needs more courage than Michael is possessed of," said the Hermit.

"No! but he might neglect, or persecute! there are many ways to end a woman's life without pouring poison down her throat. I will see him however, and hear what he has to say for himself. But hark! surely that cannot be noon that the Chapel clock is striking."

"In truth is it," said the Hermit.

"Then I must begone, for I have little time to spare," returned the officer starting from his seat, "but though I mean to go by Weggis, I know not the way thither, for I have been so long absent that I have forgotten all these mountain paths."

"That youth who left me when you came hither, shall be your guide," said Father Paul.

"he is my pupil, and will be proud of the task. Though only a cowherd's son I doubt not you will be pleased with his company. I have bestowed some small pains on his education, and he gives me no reason to repent having undertaken the task. He is gone to the Hospital, but I will call him hither."

They were now in front of the Little Chapel, and Walther Stanz quickly appeared in answer to the Hermit's summons. The old man explained to him the task he required him to perform, and undertook to excuse his absence from his usual duties, to Brother Ambrose, his employer. He then wished Aloys Reding farewell, and promising to communicate to him the first news he received from Berne, he slowly took his way towards his lonely cave.

For a few moments after Aloys Reding had returned the salutation of the young mountaineer, he stood surveying him with evident amazement and curiosity.

"You wish Sir, I believe, to be shown the

road to Weggis," said Walther courteously raising his broad brimmed hat from his dark curling hair, as he spoke.

"Yes true, I had forgotten," returned the officer starting as his wild and wandering thoughts were thus disturbed, "there was a time when I needed no guide amongst the paths of hill, or valley, but I have trodden so many lands since then, that these haunts of my childhood are forgotten."

"Methought," said the youth as he turned and led the way, "that the scenes the heart first clung to, were remembered for ever. I feel, as if though I traversed the world, the rocks, and woods, and pastures, of the Righi, would be distinct before my sight as now."

"When you are as old as I am," said Aloys somewhat bitterly, "you will find that fancy so much embellishes the past, we cannot trust to its pictures."

"But surely there are some things too fair for any fancy to embellish," replied the young

man sighing deeply, though unconsciously, "and perhaps if you have any remembrance of this glorious prospect, you will admit it to be one of them," he added, when on reaching the brink of a precipice, at whose woody base nearly four thousand feet beneath, lay the lake of Lucerne, he pointed with proud exultation to the wide and varied landscape.

"Yes this is magnificent, and must ever awaken the enthusiastic spirit of youth and age," returned Reding, "especially if those who claim it as their own, what is the feeling of all who dwell upon the Rigi. You were born here I think Father Paul informed me?"

"In yonder chalet;" returned the youth pointing to a small wooden cottage, or rather hut, which shadowed by a lonely pine tree, stood on one of the highest inaccessible ridges of the mountain; "my father dwelt there, and it is now my home."

"And your mother's, is it not?"

"Yes, and my poor dumb brother Fritz who

is two years younger than I am, lives with her likewise ; it looks dreary now, when the snows are neither frozen, nor melted, but in winter and summer it is a pleasant place."

" And how many changes of season may you have seen there?" inquired the officer.

" I am just twenty two," was Walther's reply, " but take heed Sir, our path lies this way, and if you are not used to the mountain, you had better take my pole to steady your steps, for it is steep and slippery."

In truth the descent for nearly three quarters of a league, was attended with extreme difficulty ; but Walther swung from branch to branch, and leapt from rock to rock, with the agility of an Alpine Huntsman, and Aloys Reding, though long unaccustomed to the exercise, felt the spirit of his youth revive within him in these familiar scenes, and followed, though somewhat more cautiously in his track.

At the end of an hour, all the difficulties of the descent were past, and the remainder of the

way, led over smiling pasture-lands, intersected by picturesque wooden cottages, orchards, and scattered walnut-trees. The officer and his guide here paused to gaze with silent admiration, over this lovely scene of pastoral tranquillity, and drink at the pure source of a spring, gushing from the mossy bank at their side, and directed by the labour of man to fructify a hundred meadows, ere it mingled its waters with the Lake.

They very quickly resumed their course but they had not advanced far, when they heard a sweet female voice singing the following words.

THE SONG OF THE SPRING.

Arise, and come away with me,
O'er mountains free to roam,
And I a world will show to thee,
More bright than thy lov'd home.

THE THIRST FOR GOLD.

The snows are melting in the sun,
The leaves are budding fast,
The winter's chilling storms are done,
And spring returns at last.

The mists are rising from the lake,
Morn's light is o'er the hills,
The birds are singing in the brake,
And by the mountain rills.

At morn when ling'ring darkness shrouds
The valley with her wings,
In sunbeams high above the clouds,
The cowherd gaily sings.

At eve, the lonely shepherd's horn,
Soft as the fading light,
There often on the breeze is borne
Like voice of wandering sprite.

Then haste, and come away with me,
O'er mountains free to roam,
And I a world will show to thee,
More bright than thy lov'd home.

An abrupt turning in a flight of rugged
steps, hewn in the living rock, speedily dis-
closed the songstress to their view, who with a
start of timid surprise stood still in the very
middle of her path.

She was a fair young maiden, attired in the

picturesque dress of the peasants of Lucerne, and the tight black boddice, and short striped skirt, displayed to peculiar advantage the beauty of her slender figure and delicate ancles. Her dark hair drawn back from her fair and spotless forehead, was surmounted by the little round flat straw hat of the country, and hung down behind nearly to her feet, in two thick rich braids, a Circassian might have envied. She had a clear complexion, laughing black eyes, and the prettiest lips and teeth in the Canton; her figure had all the roundness of health, and her carriage the graceful freedom of a mountaineer, whom no necessity has subjected to deprivations or irksome labour. But it was the joyous sweetness of her frank bright smile, that first caught the eye of Reding, and fixed it with an admiring gaze upon the innocent, and honest countenance of the maiden.

“Walther Stanz !” she exclaimed, when after respectfully wishing the stranger good day, she

returned the salutation of his guide, with a cheek as glowing as his own, "what good fortune has brought you hither, to save me the toil of climbing to the Hospital in search of you?"

"Have you need of my services, Justine?" he enquired with some confusion.

"My cousin Dame Muller has," replied the girl, "and would fain speak with you without delay."

"I am going to Weggis with this gentleman," he said looking towards the officer, "but as I return I will not fail to come to her."

"Were you to follow me now, it would not detain you a quarter of an hour," was Justine's reply, "and perhaps this stranger—"

"Could find his way to Weggis alone, my fair damsel," said Reding interrupting her with a good humoured smile, "is not that what you would say?"

"Nay, Sir, I meant nothing so uncourteous," she returned with a deep blush.

"Perhaps not! but nevertheless it is what I mean to attempt," he replied; "your friend Walther will, I have no doubt, be of more use if he follows your guidance, than if I follow his; in other years I often trod the road, and now the precipice is past, I am certain I shall no longer need his help. So farewell to you both, and many thanks; we shall meet again ere long I trust!" and in spite of the remonstrances of the young people, Aloys Reding darted past them, and springing down the rocky stair was soon out of sight.

Neither Justine nor Walther spoke for a few moments, after they were thus left alone; the attention of the latter seemed wholly engrossed by watching the maiden picking a primrose to pieces that she had gathered from the bank, and as usual in such cases, she was the first to break silence, by enquiring the name of the stranger.

"Aloys Reding," replied the mountaineer; "he is one of the first men in Schwytz, having returned there after a long foreign service. He

is likewise a friend of Father Paul's and I know not what the Hermit will say, when he hears how I have deserted him."

"It was no fault of yours Walther," returned the maiden, "and moreover my cousin has urgent need of you, which he had not; I am sure you will not refuse to come to Dame Muller's with me?"

An irresistible smile accompanied these words, and Walther, who had never dreamt of denying the maiden's request, at once signified his joyful compliance with her wishes.

Nearly a week had elapsed since they last met, and that day he had indulged no hope of doing so, yet though his heart was very full, he spoke little during their walk to the farm of the widow, by whom Justine had been brought up, and with whom, by her uncle Michael Graaf's permission, she was still a frequent visitor. But whether it was the charms of the scenery, or the chance of seeing Walther Stanz her old playfellow, that attracted the maiden

thither, it might be difficult to decide, but it certainly was not any affection to Dame Muller herself, whom she neither liked, nor respected, more especially since she had become the tormenting and constant advocate of Carl Staffer's unwelcome addresses.

A short walk across the meadows soon brought them before the door of the cottage. It was built of wood with an overhanging roof, and gaily painted balconies of the same material round every story, whilst the name of its builder, and a holy distich figured in large German characters surrounded by an ornamental border of scarlet and yellow, beneath its pointed gable. Though it had no air of wealth, it was superior to most of the cottages on the mountain, and bespoke its proprietor to be possessed of at least a decent competence.

Justine quickly ascended an outer stair to the gallery round the first story, and lifting the latch of a door in front of the building,

ushered her companion without more ceremony into a large well lighted kitchen.

A wood fire burnt on a wide open stove platform on one side of this apartment, and the smoke had considerably blackened the cross rafters that supported the broad planked ceiling ; but the floor was cleanly swept, and the polish of the strong wooden furniture bore testimony to the housewife's industry. Milk vessels, as shining as ivory, stood drying around the hearth, bundles of yarn hung from the roof, side by side with nets of dried fruit, herbs and sausages ; many implements of husbandry were suspended against the walls, and a wooden clock ticked as loudly as a hundred grasshoppers, above the old deal wardrobe, where piles of linen were laid carefully in store. Cheerful plenty was the characteristic of this simple dwelling, and Dame Muller who was busily turning her spindle when the young people entered, was a fit inhabitant for such a place.

Though sprung from one of the oldest families of her Canton, she had been accustomed to labour from her youth. Totally uneducated, the works of her hands, and the profits arising therefrom, were the sole subjects with which her mind was habitually occupied. Clear-sighted, keen, thrifty, and resolute, though endowed only with a narrow intellect, she had saved her husband, who was a weak spend-thrift, from utter ruin, and after his death had continued to toil so hard for herself, that the profits of her little farm had greatly increased, and her poorer neighbours whispered, that she had saved more money than many a Burgher in Lucerne. Though her naturally violent temper was perpetually aroused by the slightest imaginary insult to her vanity, or self-esteem, and as she advanced in years her parsimony and irritability greatly increased, she was not a bad hearted woman ; she would save a batz for a neighbour as readily as for herself, and when not contradicted she was often in a

good humour for a week together, more especially to men ; and though Justine's obstinate refusal of Staffer had highly provoked her, she received Walther Stanz with a most smiling and friendly countenance. In truth the young mountaineer was a great favourite with her ; he was always ready to listen to her advice, and return her little neighbourly attentions to his mother, by all the services in his power, and his prompt compliance with her summons that day, put her in peculiar good humour.

“ Well, children,” she said laying aside her work as soon as Justine and her companion entered, “ I did not expect you for these two hours, or more ! Walther, good day ; you were ever a ready helper in fold, or barn, or I had not sent to ask a favour of you now.”

“ Your kindness when my mother lay sick of a fever last winter, needs more return than I can ever make,” was the young man's reply.

“ Lena will do the same for me without payment when I need it,” said the Dame, “ and

now Walther, whilst all the men and maidens are out cutting grass for the cattle (it is a scarce article yet I can tell you,) I must briefly inform you of my business. Can you go to Lucerne with Justine before the sun sets? the weather is calm, and I think there are no storms to be feared upon the Lake. I want you to take a letter to Michael Graaf—which you might do without her to be sure, but she has some purchases to make in the town, and no one else settles these matters for me like Justine.”

The heart of Walther bounded at this proposition, but he replied with as much composure as he could assume, that Father Ambrose had no further need of him for that day at the Hospital, and he should be delighted to spend his leisure hours in doing her any service.

“Well you are a fine youth, that nobody can deny,” she returned, “and I won’t forget you when I make my cheeses. It is rather too hard work for Justine to row up the Lake alone, though she can manage an oar as well as any

maiden between Weggis and Fluelen, for a short pull; and I always think it waste of money to pay those greedy boatmen. It is like putting good coin into the Lake I say, particularly when Justine has an old playfellow like you at hand to save all further expense and trouble, and one who will take good care of her into the bargain."

"I am glad you remembered me," said the youth, "can I be of any further use."

"In this you will greatly serve me," she replied, "for the girl takes a letter to her uncle Graaf, which it is of importance both to him and to me, that he should receive with the utmost dispatch, and we all know Walther, you are the quickest rower in the Canton. Justine will bring you a bowl of curds, and an oaten cake, and when they are eaten the sooner you are on your way the better."

"I thank you, but I have dined, and am ready at once to depart."

"That's well," said the Dame, evidently re-

lieved when her hospitality was thus declined, "I'll remember you, when I make my cheeses and mayhap Walther you may be able to row up to Lucerne again, for Justine to-morrow two hours before noon; it is my churning day, and as we killed a pig this morning, I shall be glad of all the hands I can get, and nobody can salt a fitch better than Justine. I will give her the letters, and now you had better be off! You will engage to bring her back, won't you?"

"With the greatest pleasure," said the delighted youth, at once forgetting all his former prudent resolutions of shunning the dangerous society of Justine, and had he dared to look towards her, he might have seen, that though she blushed, her eye sparkled with a joy not inferior to his own, when she heard her cousin make this unexpected arrangement.

Dame Muller little knew the mischief she was doing. She was as perfectly incapable of divining the secret love that for years had been

growing up between these young people before her eyes, as she was of solving a problem in mathematics. She had never loved anything but herself in the whole course of her life, and moreover aware that Justine was well born, and regarded by her rich uncle as his heir, it never occurred to her mind, that there could be the slightest danger of Walther Stanz, the poor cowherd's son, aspiring to an alliance with one so immeasurably his superior. In fact, she considered him as perfectly safe an associate for her rich and pretty cousin, as Father Paul himself could have been; and this feeling of security was the great reason, why, since her husband's death, she had ever chosen Walther to assist her, when she had need of help, and at all times allowed him to associate like a brother with Justine.

Father Paul saw the matter in a different light, but he gave her no warning, for well acquainted with the characters of the young people, he knew they were so justly suited to

each other, as is rarely the case in wedlock, and wisely judged that he was securing the happiness of both, by promoting an attachment, which he knew must be the necessary consequence of their frequent intercourse.

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CHAPTER III.

By heavenly feet thy paths are trod,
Undying loves, who here ascend a throne
To which the steps are mountains ; where the god,
Is a pervading life and light—so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone
In the still cave and forest ; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power,
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

BYRON.

THE sun was yet high in all its noontide glory,
when Walther and Justine resumed their walk.
Repeatedly had they before trodden the
mountain together, but the unuttered love with-
in their own hearts that morning diffused over
the changing scenes of picturesque beauty
around them, a glory and a beauty they had
never felt till then.

The sunbeams slanting over the deep, dark abyss, from whence the murmur of the torrent arose like the voice of a chained giant, the shadows of the pine trees across the rocks, the pure still air, the waterfalls dancing with joyous chorus from the immeasurable precipices, the peasant's song rising from the valley as he drove his flocks to the stream, the notes of the birds and the hum of the reviving insects amidst the budding orchards, thrilled like harmonious music to the soul of Justine. She felt, as if she had never known happiness till then, and fearful lest the sound of her voice might betray her emotion, she walked on in deep silence.

The feelings of her companion were far from being of the same pleasurable character; for though he loved not less, his passion was hopeless, and the beautiful world around him, did not calm, but embittered his anguish.

Again and again was he on the point of flinging himself at the feet of Justine, and pouring forth the secret anguish of his struggling soul,

but he felt that such a disclosure might part them for ever, and with increased speed he sprang forward from rock to rock, as if he sought by the velocity of his movements to escape from the dangerous temptation.

Justine attempted at first to keep pace with him, though she had little inclination to shorten their walk, but ere long finding matters grew rather worse than better, she called on him with laughing good humour to slacken his speed.

“If I were a goat, or a chamois, Walther,” she said, “I could scarcely avoid being left behind. You hunters are so accustomed to go bounding from crag to crag, that you forget we poor helpless women have not been trained to the chase.”

“True—true—I beg a thousand pardons,” returned the youth blushing deeply, as he arrested his steps; “you are right to keep me in order, Justine, though in truth I was not thinking of the chase, but of the days when we

were children, and came together to this shady copse, to gather nuts and hurtleberries. We were very happy then."

"Surely not more so than now?" replied the maiden.

Walther made no answer, but he sighed deeply, and continued his way.

"Do you remember," she added when they had proceeded a few paces further, "how often we brought our crust of bread to the spring beneath yonder high grey rock, though it was far from home, and you had ever to carry me back again up the steep path?"

"Can I ever forget it?" answered her lover, in a low sad voice, though without turning to look at her he addressed. "The sun must be off it now, and it will be a pleasant resting place, and you will drink a cup of the water for the sake of old times, will you not Justine?"

"With all my heart," she answered in a tremulous voice, and then in silence they continued to descend.

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They ere long emerged from the brushwood to a more barren and abrupt part of the mountain, alone divided from the well known spring, by a huge mass of rock, which undermined by the long action of the waters had fallen many thousand feet, to rest for succeeding ages on that narrow ledge, as a monument of the mighty powers of nature, and to tell to thinking minds the story of an ever changing world.

The path around its base was scarcely a yard wide, with the rock on one hand and on the other, an abrupt precipice of nearly a thousand feet, at the bottom of which, lay the deep and purple waters of the Lake.

To those accustomed to the mountains, there was little danger even in this fearful pass ; nevertheless, Walther observing that the ground was slippery, insisted on his fair companion here preceding him, that he might watch her footsteps, and have assurance of her safety. She laughed at the precaution, but

was gratified by its kindness, and passing on, had reached the very narrowest point of the path, when one of the fierce hunting dogs of the Alps, with an angry bark that made the mountains ring, flew at her from behind the rock, and completely prevented her progress. Startled by the sudden attack, and forgetful of her dangerous position, Justine receded a few paces. But still the animal's fury waxed the greater, and Walther beheld her movement with unutterable horror. One step more, and she had fallen to inevitable death down the measureless abyss. He knew the character of her ferocious assailant too well, to doubt that in another instant he would spring upon her like a ravenous beast of prey—he gave a faint cry—rushed past her—and with one blow of the mountain staff he held, the outrageous blood-hound lay dead at his feet, and Justine was rescued from the brink of destruction.

Forgetful of all but the danger she had escaped, he had led on the trembling maiden

a few paces further, and having taken her hand in his, was endeavouring to soothe her agitation, when they were both startled by a man springing up from the ground, as if he had been sleeping in that cool recess.

They instantly recognized the ungainly figure of Carl Staffer, the persevering and unwelcome suitor of Justine. On the present occasion however, without saluting or taking the slightest notice of the maiden, he turned with ungovernable fury towards Walther.

"Scoundrel," he cried with threatening voice and action, "is it thou, who hast dared to slay my precious hound before my sight. Had I my staff I would chastise thee soundly."

"I am sorry there was any necessity for smiting so noble an animal," returned the young mountaineer, with a courtesy that cost him much, "but surely the life of Justine Weber is worth a thousand such."

"Base son of a Bondman," cried Staffer furiously, "dare you to bandy words with me?"

who gave such a caitiff as thou art, authority to be this maiden's champion? beggarly upstart—out of my path I say! or by the saints I will give thee such a dressing for thy insolence as shall make thee repent it, to the last hour of thy life."

"I dare thee to do thy worst! thou art no kin to the maiden to have a right to interfere between her and me!" cried Walther who was stung to the soul by this insulting language from one between whom and himself the consciousness of rivalry had already sown bitter enmity.

"Walther! Walther! for the love of mercy answer him not, and let us go on our way!" cried Justine hanging to the right arm of her excited lover, so as to prevent him brandishing the staff he had already half raised, with the firm and nervous grasp of anger. But though his eye rested on her for a moment, with a look of unutterable anguish, he struggled to release himself from her hold, and yet the more, when

Staffer with a laugh of bitter mockery, continued to vent his long cherished jealousy, in the most taunting and insulting language.

Walther's own painful sense of his humble station, and the utter hopelessness of his passion for Justine, combined with the distracting consciousness that she stood by, the witness of his disgrace, roused his wrath almost to madness, and alternately uttering broken words of defiance against his opponent between his clenched teeth, and entreating the maiden to leave him free to take revenge, he endeavoured with a violence against which she was little accustomed to contend, to release himself from the convulsive grasp of her trembling fingers.

"Ha, coward ! can a woman hold thee back," cried Staffer, and he again laughed with a mocking insolence, ten thousand times more galling than his words.

"Justine—Justine—if you would have me live, release me !" exclaimed Walther almost

fiercely, and leaving his staff in her hands, with one bound he sprang from her as he uttered the words, and rushed forward to measure his strength with the base rival who had so wantonly and wilfully goaded him almost to madness by his vulgar insults.

Staffer like himself was powerful and athletic, and it was a fearful sight to behold those enraged men standing face to face upon that narrow platform, with breath drawn in, and nostrils distended, eyeing each other with fiery glances, for a moment ere the struggle recommenced, and arm was twined through arm, with the skill of practised wrestlers.

Justine overpowered by surprise and consternation, stood trembling and irresolute, watching the contest with feelings of the most intense agony, conscious that she, and she only was its cause; conscious that for her, the dear companion of her childhood had been exposed to the most bitter trial a man could endure, and that now even before her eyes in his just

indignation against his base minded enemy, he had placed his life upon the hazard of a moment, without her having the power either to rescue or assist him.

Wildly did she continue to keep watch, whilst with well matched skill, these mountain wrestlers put forth their utmost power, and with distended muscles and unyielding minds, limb around limb, seemed alternately to win and lose the mastery in this fierce combat. At one moment Walther was driven to the very brink of the rock—the next he held his opponent half suspended above the precipice, till the eye grew dizzy, and the heart sick to behold them ; yet the invisible impulse in their breasts, which wrought them to such deeds, was a far more fearful thing.

For a time she called wildly and repeatedly on them to desist, but gradually her interest in the combat became so intense that her voice was hushed, and with clenched hands and quivering lips she stood gazing with silent

agony on the appalling spectacle. Again they approached the brink of the abyss ; but this time it was Walther who was driven next to the fearful verge. Staffer knew his advantage—but he knew likewise, that the arms of his adversary were closely knit around him, and if Walther fell he would not fall alone. Wildly and fiercely he struggled to break loose, and cast the half exhausted shepherd down to the deep, dark lake.

Walther for an instant tottered on the very brink of the cliff; the earth crumbled beneath his feet, and a large stone disturbed by his weight, went crashing down from branch to branch, and rock to rock, till the noise of its rapid descent was lost in the immeasurable depths.

With a wild shriek Justine hid her face in her hands—there was a rushing in her ears as of many waters, and the pulses of her heart were suspended.

Still the noise of the struggle was unabated ;

she looked up—Walther had regained his balance, and gathering all his strength to make a last great effort, he absolutely lifted his enemy more than a span from the ground, and ere he could recover his footing, flung him at full length upon the earth.

The conquered Staffer had lain many minutes stunned and insensible without giving the smallest sign of life, yet still his panting victor bewildered by what had passed, stood gazing with mingled feelings of horror and exultation on the victim of a contest in which he had so unwillingly engaged, when Justine approaching him with trembling steps, laid her hand upon his arm, and in hurried accents implored him not to tarry there.

“He has injured me, Justine,” he said, “and heaven only knows how bitterly he has wrung my heart, but I cannot leave him here to die. I have taught him that though I may be base born, I am not the coward he called me, and I covet no further revenge. We will stay

here till he revives, and give him such aid as he may then stand in need of."

"No, no, Walther, I entreat you not to think of it," returned the weeping maiden, "he is a rough, hard hearted man, and if he find you here when he recovers, I know not what may come of it."

"He has had fighting enough for to-day," answered the young man bitterly, "and though I could not curb my passion when he taunted me as the cowardly son of a bondman—"

"Ha! hath he dared to insult you thus?" demanded one who having unseen approached, at that moment stood unexpectedly behind them.

Walther turned suddenly at the sound of the well known voice, and beheld the figure of Father Paul, which he instantly recognized, though dressed in the ordinary garb of a peasant; he no longer wore any part of his usual monkish attire save the broad brimmed beaver hat, which was far drawn down over his brows.

“ He called you bondman in this maiden’s presence, and you struck him down ! speak, Walther, is it not thus ? ” added the Hermit after a brief pause, for the agitation of his pupil was too great for him to return an immediate reply.

“ He heaped insults like burning coals upon my head ! ” answered the youth at length in hurried and troubled accents ; “ perhaps I was wrong—but I lost patience. We struggled hard, but at length I gained the mastery.”

“ It is well for thee now ; I know not how it may be hereafter,” said Father Paul ! “ but remember Walther, that it is not only for the sake of others, but often for ourselves that we should bear and forbear. We win the mightiest victory when we master our own passions,—but fool that I am, what mortal ever did so. The world would be at a stand if that were accomplished, so get thee hence, and make the best of an evil thou hast now no power to remedy. Go to Michael Graaf, and see how

he will receive thee, when he hears of the drubbing thou hast given his champion. He has a shrewd suspicion already, that thou lovest his niece, and hates thee for what he deems presumption ; dost thou think he will like thee the better for the day's work thou hast done?"

"He scarcely knows that such a being lives," returned Walther blushing deeply at the accusation the Hermit's words conveyed.

"He may have cause to know it hereafter," rejoined the strange old man, and his wild and bitter laugh rang harshly amongst the rocks of that silent and solitary place. "But you have tarried here too long ; I will take charge of this man," he added after he had briefly examined the prostrate body, "he is stunned, but not seriously hurt I suspect, so be easy on that score, and remember Justine has letters for Michael Graaf, and pleasant news brooks no delay ; but tell me girl, are you to abide for the present at Lucerne?"

"No, holy Father," she returned blushing

deeply, "Walther has promised to row me back again ere noon to-morrow."

"Ha, is it thus?" said the Hermit, as if giving unconscious utterance to his thoughts, as he scrutinized her changing and beautiful countenance, with a peculiar smile of triumph and satisfaction, "then heaven speed the work, though the wicked shall come to judgment. But away foolish children, away! Staffer is reviving, so begone, and remember an old man's saying—there is nothing earthly worth possessing but affection! sincere, pure, devoted love, is the rarest and best gift of heaven! be true to one another and you may defy the world! Begone—begone—do you not see the man revives!"

Justine needed no second command; overpowered with confusion at hearing a secret, she believed confined to her own breast, thus openly discoursed of by a stranger, in the presence of him to whom least of all she would have wished it revealed, she hurried from the

spot with feelings of shame and trepidation such as she had never before experienced.

She soon heard the steps of Walther rapidly pursuing her, but to speak to him was an effort beyond her power, and though her heart thrilled with joy when she remembered the old man's words, and she felt that all he said was true, her only desire was to escape from him, to avoid the necessity of addressing him, or feeling that his gaze was reading the tumult of her heart, from her agitated countenance.

Walther meanwhile continued to follow her with exulting rapture. The words of the solitary had rent for a time the chains of bondage from his spirit, and filled his mind with hopes of surpassing brightness. The clouds of evil, that till then had appeared perpetually gathering around him were all dispelled by the light of the glowing passion no longer smothered within his heart, and excited by visions whose foundations were impalpable, emboldened he knew not wherefore, he, so

lately the diffident and the despairing, with throbbing heart and bounding steps now chased the flying maiden.

All things were in unison with the power that stirred within him, the rushing cataract, the fresh bright air, the dancing shadows on his path, the rustling breeze and the chorus of the unseen birds, although he knew it not, fed the full current of his feeling. The spirit of love was moving over all. Justine ere long reached a little shadowed platform, where the dividing paths led in opposite directions to the Lake, and though she well knew that by which her companion purposed to descend, either from weariness, or some change of feeling, she here paused as if doubtful which to pursue.

Walther was at her side in an instant, "Justine," he said as he gently took her unresisting hand, "why will you speed so fast. It may be long till we are again thus alone together, and the moments to me are very precious."

The maiden neither answered, nor raised her eyes from the ground, but her blushes mantled even over her brow.

“ Yet you seek to avoid me !” he impetuously continued ; “ you are angry at what Father Paul has said—you are indignant at the bare suspicion that a poor cowherd’s son should dare to lift his thoughts so high. Yet Justine—now he has said so much in my presence, I must repeat the words, though your eternal displeasure were the consequence ! I must reveal to you myself, the whole extent of my presumption ; I must tell you, though it may part us for ever, how day after day, and month after month, you have been the secret idol of my soul till all things else were worthless. Pity me Justine, at least, if you cannot forgive me, for my secret has been forced from my lips. I have seen others seeking your love, yet I spoke not, though well nigh maddened by the spectacle—I have heard you urged to bestow

your hand on the rich and the honored, yet my agony was suppressed to rankle in my bursting heart—but the spell is broken, and to die were easier than to be silent. Oh, Justine, answer me one word—only one word—we have known each other from childhood, then do not scorn me if you cannot love.”

“Scorn you Walther! have I ever done so?” murmured the agitated girl.

“No, in truth you have not,” he replied, “your nature was too pure and gentle to wound the heart of the humble with contempt, but now, when my whole presumption is revealed—when the poor shepherd has dared to cast aside humility, and confess the madness of his love, forbearance may forsake you. Yet could you know—if for a moment you could dream how dark, how void the world would be to me if banished from your presence, you would yet pardon me, and let me sometimes come as heretofore to find sweet solace in your company

for days and weeks of anguish. Speak to me Justine—tell me that thus far I am forgiven, and that as a sister you will love me still !”

“ Oh Walther—more, far more,” returned the weeping maiden, in almost inarticulate accents, as she raised her tearful eyes to his, with an expression that like the touch of an enchanter’s wand, at once dispelled the shadows of despair from the heart of her lover.

She spoke no more, but her head sank upon his shoulder, and his lips were pressed upon her burning cheek, till tears had ceased to glisten there.

“ Yes Walther,” she said, at length in a low, sweet, thrilling voice, “ we have found each other—and let us, as the Hermit said, from henceforth cling together.”

“ But your uncle !” he returned, “ he would rather follow you to the grave, than see you the wife of such a beggar as I am !”

“ He loves me tenderly, and will do anything for my happiness,” answered the girl, a bright

smile flashing through her tears like sunbeams through a shower ; “ he never refused me anything in the whole course of his life.”

“ Ah, Justine !” returned her companion, “ your own kind heart deceives you. You forget that he has given his promise to Staffer to do all he can to persuade you to become his wife.”

“ True—true—I had forgotten Staffer,” she replied with a faint sigh ; “ I had forgotten too we were on our way to Lucerne—I had forgotten all but you Walther!—but this must not be. The sun is already waning fast ; when it arose, how little did we foresee all that would happen ere it set. But my cousin’s letters are of consequence, and we have already delayed too long.”

“ Nay, do not begrudge me this flitting hour of happiness,” rejoined her lover. “ Heaven only knows when so bright a sun may shine again on me !”

“ Why should we see the future darkly !”

said Justine, whose young and enthusiastic spirit, more accustomed to watch the stately steps of nature in those wilds, than to explore the mysteries of human destiny, and utterly unconscious how fearfully that is often influenced by human passions, had not the least apprehension that those who professed to regard her with affection, could be the first to sacrifice her happiness to their own sordid interests; "we are young, and strong, and true! are we not, Walther! then trust in me, and sorrow shall come no more near us. But away! away! if we tarry thus long on the road, you will no more be sent as my escort."

"Indeed Justine there is no need for this haste," said Walther, when at a rapid pace, she bounded down the path, "if we are at Lucerne by sunset, it will be soon enough, and I will promise to row you like lightning up the Lake."

The maiden made no reply, but by one of her bright sunny smiles that gladdened all they

shone upon, but though they were then within a mile of Weggis, nearly another hour had elapsed before she was seated with Walther in a little bark he hired there.

The boat shot like an arrow from the wood-shadowed banks over the smooth clear glittering waters; all was silent around; a golden lustre lay upon the neighbouring hills and the smooth deep waters near, whilst the giant mountains at the head of the Lake, dimly and mistily visible amidst a veil of clouds, seemed in their purple twilight, like regions of an untrodden planet, and Walther as he gazed on his fair and beloved companion, felt as if they, and they alone, existed in that beautiful world, and that escaped from the trials of earth, he was floating with the chosen of his heart to some island of eternal bliss.

How seldom do such gleams of heavenly joy break on the earthly pilgrim's way! how seldom, like dew from the fountains of Paradise, do truth and love so purify the human heart and

exalt it above the shadows of care, that it can feel the full measure, even of earthly happiness, or duly appreciate the beauty, the grandeur, and the wonders of created things.

Nor are such dreams more rare than evanescent, and long before the swift boat of the mountaineer had gained the landing place at the old wooden bridge of Lucerne, the exultation of his heart had vanished, and in spite of all the cheering promises of Justine, he saw only the image of the Treasurer, Michael Graaf, denouncing with threatening aspect, his eternal separation from the object of his love.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Still was his seal'd up bosom haunted,
By thoughts, which nature has implanted
Too deeply rooted thence to vanish ;
Howe'er our stifled tears we banish,
When struggling as they rise to start,
We check those waters of the heart,
They are not dried—those tears unshed
But flow back to the fountain head.”

BYRON.

SOME men are born almost without the faculty of perceiving the beauties of nature, and there are many more, who cease to admire, or even observe them, when habit has rendered them familiar. To which of these classes the Treasurer, Michael Graaf belonged, it might have been difficult to decide, but at all events, as he walked on the evening of that day to and fro

on the Kappel Brucke, one of the largest covered wooden bridges of Lucerne, with his arms crossed behind him, it was quite evident he was no admirer of the picturesque.

The day was fast drawing to a close, and the undulating walls, and pointed turrets of the ancient fortifications crowning the high ground at the back of the town, already lay in deep purple shadow against the golden west, though the peaks of the Righi, Mount Pilate, and the surrounding mountains yet caught the last bright beams of the invisible sun. Still and dark the waters of the deep Lake lay motionless, reflecting rock, and tree, and precipice, and height, from their tranquil mirror where here and there a boat might at times be seen darting near the shore, like a water bird in pursuit of its food.

But Michael Graaf perceived nothing of all this. The covered bridge of wood, with its quaint carvings, and yet quainter pictures, by which some artist of the fifteenth century had

sought to illustrate the truths and tales of holy writ, though his chosen place of recreation after the toils of the day, attracted his attention no more than the splendid scenery extended like a panorama around it, as immured in deep thought, he slowly continued his way, only at times changing his attitude, when it was necessary to return the salutation customarily paid by every passer by, in that unsophisticated region.

Peasant girls in round flat straw hats adorned with flowers, velvet boddices, full white linen sleeves, short skirts, blue stockings and buckled shoes, repeatedly passed him, for their work for the day was done; and a smile not unfrequently enlivened his countenance, as he bowed courteously to these buxom damsels.

Indeed his face though heavy and colourless, was such as would by all superficial observers have been deemed expressive merely of good-nature. Though the Treasurer had reached his fiftieth year, it was soft, fair, and yet un-

wrinkled ; but to those well skilled in physiognomy, or less easily imposed upon, there were such suspicious lines perceptible around the corners of the thick lipped mouth, and keen light eyes, as sufficed to destroy all confidence in the plausible magistrate.

The temper might be good, and the affections warm, but there was something to be suspected in the character ; something that sought concealment, and provoked mistrust.

But happily for Michael he was unconscious that this was perceptible to any one, or that any other human being knew that, whilst he talked frequently of honesty, liberality, and strict dealings, he concerned himself little about any principle whatever, more than was necessary to assume its semblance ; and in fact, he was so good a hypocrite, that for many successive years, he had filled with honour, the principle offices in his native town, and clothing his face with smiles, he was commonly

thought to be a very upright Burgher, and most kind-hearted man.

It was true he seldom gave anything but his pity, even in cases of the most urgent necessity, and men whispered he was very fond of gold, but then he was known to be rich, and wealth covers a multitude of sins. Moreover this important person was universally considered a bachelor, and that inclined all the fair sex to be indulgent to his failings, particularly as he was by no means disinclined to indulge them with gentle flirtations, for which in spite of all their insinuations he well knew his former engagements would exempt him from paying the penalty of matrimony; and as long as every spinster in Lucerne had an apparent chance of winning this wealthy prize, they all agreed in extolling him as a paragon of perfection. His ostensible heiress, Justine Weber, the daughter of his deceased sister, was not less an object of attraction to the

unmarried men of the town and Canton, and perhaps a little of the Treasurer's popularity might be owing to the charms of his beautiful niece, and the kindness he had invariably shown her ever since the death of her parents had left her entirely dependant on his bounty.

It was at his expense that she had been bred in the farm house of Dame Muller, for the Burgher wisely thought that the mountain air was better for a child than the comparatively corrupted atmosphere of Lucerne, and though little pains had been taken either to discipline or inform her mind, the soil was rich, and sweet blossoms as if indigenous, had sprung up there, though none save Walther Stanz knew the whole purity and loveliness of this fair creature's thoughts; for with all her unuttered hopes and strong imaginings, her habits were as simple as those of her companions, and she was utterly unconscious how far she differed from those with whom she daily associated.

At the beginning of the past winter much to her regret, she had been recalled by her uncle to Lucerne, and formally installed as the mistress of his dwelling, and often and often during the long evenings of that gloomy season had the figure of Walther Stanz seemed to stand before her, and in spite of Dame Muller's ill temper she had shed tears of bitter regret for the mountain home, endeared by all the bright associations of childhood.

But though much of Justine's character was unknown to the Treasurer, and much more he was incapable of appreciating, he loved her very fervently; for all he saw was complying and affectionate. In spite of this man's faults, and they were many, attachment was a part of his nature. No human being ever felt a greater need of having something to love, and his fair young niece, for whom he had done so much, who had known no other father, and upon whose affection he felt he had a claim,

filled up an aching void in his heart, and cheered his loneliness with her obedience, her cheerfulness and her gratitude.

On the day this narrative commences, Michael Graaf had been more than usually depressed by her absence, and had resolved that it should be long till in compliance with her solicitations, he again allowed her to pay another visit to Dame Muller. But though he sighed once or twice, during his evening walk, his mind was greatly soothed by the remembrance of a successful bargain he had recently concluded with a party of Italians from Milan, and he more than once reproached himself for his folly in heeding the company of a silly girl who set no more value on a gold Ducat than a Florin.

The stars came out in the high clear heaven, and darkness was rapidly ascending to the summits of the hills, yet still the Treasurer continued his walk, sometimes calculating the profits of the year's speculations, at others

thinking of Justine, or leaning over the boarded side of the bridge, listening listlessly to the soft gush of the waters, as they rippled and broke against the planks.

But he heard it not, for though apparently idle, his whole soul was then engrossed by certain circumstances of his former life he would gladly at all times have forgotten. No conscientious feelings disturbed him, but he set a high value on the approbation of mankind, and an incident had that day occurred to revive in some measure the remembrance of an early crime, and his almost forgotten fear of detection.

But ere the light of evening had entirely departed, his reverie was disturbed by the splashing of oars upon the lake. It was an hour, when at that early season, few ventured to navigate these uncertain waters, which after sunset, the sudden blasts from the mountains render peculiarly dangerous.

Michael Graaf immediately thought of cer-

tain smugglers from Como, with whom he occasionally transacted business, and hurried to the landing-place whilst the boat was yet invisible.

Rapidly and almost instantaneously it shot up to the rude stair at the end of the bridge, giving indisputable proof that he who handled the oars, was a powerful and skilful rower. He was a fine athletic mountaineer, apparently about twenty-two years of age, and Michael Graaf looked with some amazement at his remarkably handsome features, and graceful carriage, as he sprang on shore, and held the boat so as to enable a young girl, who was his only companion, to land without danger. He instantly saw that he was mistaken in his conjectures, for this man was evidently no smuggler; but his amazement was beyond expression when, at a second glance, he recognised the maiden who accompanied him, to be his own niece Justine.

“My good girl, what has sent you so speedily

back to Lucerne?" he inquired, when springing towards him, she took his hand and kissed him with playful affection.

"Ay, uncle, you may well be astonished," she replied, "though my coming is scarcely more wonderful than your being here to welcome me, as if some carrier pidgeon had brought you warning of my approach."

"And who may that handsome young fellow be, that rowed you hither?" demanded Michael with some uneasiness.

"Walther Stanz," answered the girl; and it did not escape her uncle's keen observation, that she blushed deeply as she turned her head aside.

"And who may Walther Stanz be? I know no such person," answered the Treasurer gravely.

"Oh yes you do!" she returned, "you often saw him, five, or six years ago at Dame Muller's, only I believe he is much grown and altered since then."

"Foolish child," said her uncle, with some displeasure, "if you needs must come at such an hour, was no other boatman to be found but Walther Stanz?"

"Cousin Muller has known him from a boy, and he is always ready to serve her on all such occasions."

"Your cousin Muller is a fool, and I would tell her so to her face, if she were here. I have warned her already, that she brings that youth too much into your company. He is no match for you my child. He is a beggar—a low born adventurer; you, of honourable descent, sprung from one of the oldest Burghers of the Canton, are not to be thrown away on such a fellow, whose father I believe was a cowherd. He is already beyond hearing I perceive, or I would have given him a sharp lesson for his temerity."

"Truly he did well to row off with all speed," said Justine playfully, as she slipped her arm through her uncle's and gently drew him towards the town, "it was no fault of his that he

was sent hither, and if you knew him better, you would think more kindly of him. He has been like a brother to me, ever since I could run alone."

"Very likely," returned the Treasurer, "and all that might be very well in those times, but when young people get older, it does not answer for them to be meeting every day; for you are a pretty girl Justine, though perhaps it is not quite wise to tell you so; you are a very pretty girl, and moreover as my heiress, you will be a very rich girl, and when a fellow like this Walther Stanz has every thing to win, he will not lack courage to push his way, if he can find opportunity. But no more of that, at present; you are a good, sweet child, and I don't want to distress you, and I am glad at all events that you have come home again, and will be out of his way for a while."

"He is coming at noon, to take me back again," said Justine half smiling, and blushing as she looked up archly in her uncle's face.

“Ha! is he?” said Michael coolly nodding in reply, “there are two words to that bargain; I am too old a trader to trust such precious merchandize in suspicious hands, I promise you. But now I think of it, what in the name of fortune, has sent you here on such a flying visit?”

“Dame Muller had a letter from Berne this morning,” returned the girl; “I know not its contents, but I believe it related to money matters, and disturbed her greatly; she wished you to see it without delay, and as none of her people could be spared from the farm she sent me, as her trustiest messenger.”

“Have you the letter?” enquired Graaf with some anxiety.

“It is here,” answered Justine, and she took it from her pocket, and gave it him immediately.

They had now reached the Weinmarkt, and the Treasurer greatly wondering what news Dame Muller could have to communicate, that

required a special messenger, cast his eyes with no small curiosity on the superscription, but though the moon had arisen, it was too dark for him to trace the characters, till having passed the fountain in the middle of the Square, he paused in the light streaming from an open window, and again attempted to decipher them.

But this inspection afforded him no information; the writing was in a hand entirely unknown to him; but as it was no place to examine the contents of the letter, he put it into his waistcoat pocket, and turning to his niece, said he must wait patiently till he got home for the full explanation of the mystery.

As he spoke, they again resumed their way, but they had not advanced many steps, when a man, whom they had not before observed, stepped from the shadow of the old fountain, and stood directly in the Treasurer's path.

The heart of Justine beat quick, as the moon beams fell bright and clear on the powerful

figure, and remarkable countenance of this unexpected apparition. Both were well known to her, but a slight sign sufficed to warn her against betraying that recognition, and then in a moment the large and piercing eyes of the man, who was evidently a stranger to Michael Graaf, were turned from her, to gaze with searching intensity on the astonished Treasurer.

It was Father Paul Styger, still wearing the same disguise in which Justine had seen him at noon upon the mountain. But though greatly surprised by his unexpected appearance and extraordinary manner, her wonder was redoubled, when she observed the effect his apparition had produced upon her uncle.

He started like one who had received an electric shock, when his eyes first fell upon the Hermit; his jaw fell, his lips quivered, and though he stood in silence, as if rooted to the spot, Justine felt the arm on which she leant tremble beneath her hand.

“Michael Graaf,” said Father Paul, in a low

voice and with an expression which made even the blood of Justine run chill "I need not ask if you know me, though it is years since we met. I thought you had worn a mask too long to be put out of countenance so easily, by an old friend. I have come to settle our reckoning! Do you hear?"

The Treasurer made an effort to reply, but the words died away like a harsh rattle in his throat.

"Do you understand me, Michael Graaf? that is more to the purpose," rejoined the Hermit smiling contemptuously at the agitation and terror he had excited, and at the same time touching the Burgher's arm with his finger, to enforce his words.

Graaf shrunk back, as if stung by a serpent, and the Solitary laughed aloud.

"Such folly as this will not serve you now," he continued scornfully, "I have come to settle our reckoning, Michael Graaf, and it behoves you to have your wits about you, for I suspect

from all I have heard, since we parted, that you will have a heavy account, and many large items to answer for."

"This is no place—" the trembling Burgher at length found breath to begin—

"All places are alike to me, for I am poor, and fear no man's opinion," was the Hermit's prompt reply; but the wealthy citizen, Michael Graaf, merchant, and Treasurer of Lucerne, may have transactions, I admit, which he may not think it expedient should be published in the market place, for I have heard that traffic, like rich diet, corrupts where it nourishes."

"Nay, Sir, I have no mysteries either to divulge, or be ashamed of," said the Treasurer, who had in some measure recovered his composure, "but if you have any business with me that concerns yourself—"

"My business does not concern myself, and you know it does not!" returned Father Paul abruptly interrupting him.

"I presume not to say whom it may con-

cern then," was Graaf's reply, "but I am certain it is no affair of mine, and whatever it may be, you must admit the public market place, at this hour, is neither a place, nor a time for its investigation. Appoint a fitter opportunity, and I am willing to meet you where you please."

The Hermit looked for a moment earnestly at the merchant, as if endeavouring to read in his countenance if any reliance was to be placed upon his promise, and then, stepping abruptly to his side, he whispered a few words in his ear, but waiting for no reply he turned away, and departing with rapid steps was soon lost in the deep shadow of a neighbouring street.

For several seconds after his disappearance, Graaf stood lost in thought, and Justine, overwhelmed with amazement watched his agitated countenance with a strange and painful feeling of mistrust she had never known till then.

Long accustomed to regard the name of

Father Paul with respect, there was a lofty dignity even in his wild words and manner that night, that far from awakening any suspicion of evil concerning this extraordinary being, rather heightened the awe and veneration she had ever felt for him, notwithstanding his contemptuous treatment of her uncle; whilst the humble replies of the Treasurer to his insulting address, and his evident consternation at his unexpected appearance, excited a strong feeling, even in the mind of this simple and inexperienced girl, that the Hermit's insinuations to his discredit, were not entirely without foundation.

Though Justine, partly from habit, and partly from gratitude for his long kindness, was attached to her uncle, with a sort of childish fondness, she was far more quicksighted to his failings than many who had a larger experience of life, and she frequently reproached herself for being so; but though she ever strove to banish such thoughts, all she had ever felt, or

surmised to his disadvantage, recurred in quick succession to her mind that night, before they reached the portal of his dwelling near the end of a street opening into the great Place.

But, nevertheless, she was grieved and distressed by the anguish she saw depicted on his countenance, when his housekeeper Babette, met them in the passage with a light ; but he made no allusion to the cause of his uneasiness, and wishing her a good night with all his usual kindness, retired to his chamber, leaving her full of curiosity and wonder concerning the strange adventure in the market place.

When she reached the little room, at all times kept ready for her reception, and sat quietly down to reflect, the first image that, as a thing of course, arose to her mind, was Walther Stanz. But it was with feelings of delight very different from any she had hitherto experienced. That day had entirely changed their mutual position, and no longer

doubtful of his love, no longer ashamed to acknowledge to herself the extent of the attachment she bore him, a calm feeling of unutterable satisfaction held undisputed possession of her heart, and in the novel and happy conviction that she was beloved by him, whose love she alone coveted to possess, she took little heed of her uncle's declared hostility to such an attachment. Trusting she knew not wherefore, that all in the future would go well, she thought only of the pleasures of the past day, and her expectations for the morrow.

"He is to be on the bridge at noon," she said to herself, "and though I am forbidden to return with him, I must be there to tell him so," and happy in this determination she quickly lay down on her uncurtained pallet, where the voices of her lover, her uncle, Staffer and Father Paul, alternately ringing in her ears, her wandering faculties were soon inextricably perplexed, and she sank into a profound sleep.

CHAPTER V.

But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had pressed upon him—and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
A grievous penalty. This unlooked for claim,
At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost.

WORDSWORTH.

WHEN Michael Graaf that night locked himself into his own chamber, his feelings were far from being of an enviable character; and having placed his light on a table, he long continued to pace the floor with hurried and agitated steps. His face was more than usually pale, and cold drops stood on his brow, as he recalled every syllable that had

been uttered by Father Paul. Yet he knew him not by that name; he never suspected that the Solitary of the Waterfall, of whose marvellous influence he had long heard much, was identical with the Styger, who had been the acquaintance of his early days; and as all the consequences of this man's unexpected appearance thronged upon his mind, his agony and perplexity found expression in wild and broken exclamations.

His whole nature seemed suddenly changed, and those who had only known the smiling, servile Treasurer in the ordinary transactions of life, would have failed to recognize him during this tempest of uncontrollable feeling.

"Fool! fool!" he murmured, as he struck his forehead with his clenched hand, "my tender conscience will prove my ruin after all. It was madness to compromise with Satan, and risk so much, if I had not courage to dare the uttermost. It was madness to create witnesses of my own dishonour. Yet that Louis

Brentano is gone—dead, no doubt, ere now, and I thought this fellow, to whom he madly told too much, must have had a bullet through his brain before now, and would never return to ask unpleasant questions. But it is too late to think of that—he is here, and though I suspect he makes the most of the little he knows, he must be silenced, and that quickly; no breath must be permitted to taint the character of the Treasurer of Lucerne. I will deny his charges; yet the fellow is keen, and should he meet and compare notes with Aloys Reding, who I hear has likewise returned, the consequences might be unpleasant! the worst must be guarded against,” and he sat down somewhat more composed, to consider the means most likely to effect the results he desired.

When the passions once permit the intellect to act, it speedily resumes the mastery, more especially in men of calm and cautious characters, like Michael; and gradually as his

reflexions became more systematically arranged, other matters unconnected with this cause for agitation recurred to his mind, till at length the remembrance of the letters brought by Justine flashed suddenly upon him. He drew the packet hastily from his pocket, tore open the cover, and eagerly glanced over the contents.

They for the moment completely stunned him, so unexpected, so overwhelming was their context. The information they contained threatened utter, and immediate ruin, and a ruin more appalling to this man, whose whole soul was in his gold, than any punishment denounced against sin, either by human, or divine laws. It announced the impending failure of a mercantile house at Berne, with which was embarked great part of his long gathered wealth; that wealth he clung to in default of children, or of virtue, as to an eternal and unchanging friend.

But he was not a man to be overwhelmed by

actual difficulties, much less by such as were yet only anticipated ; and deriving hope from a second perusal of the letter, he speedily decided what was best to be done. Even in the most trying circumstances, he was never blind to a casual advantage, nor lost it for lack of activity, and in this new stroke of fortune, in which most men would have seen nothing but adversity, he found a germ of hope.

The night was now far spent, and the minster clock, at this moment, sounded loud and clear on the motionless air, and reminded him that the time was rapidly approaching which Styger, ere they parted in the Weinmarkt, had appointed for the meeting. He would willingly have made a great sacrifice to avoid the interview, for he was ill prepared to give the explanations that he felt certain this extraordinary man was about to demand, but his character was at stake, and he felt that, however painful he must hear his accusations, and ascertain the extent of his knowledge. Facts,

he believed unknown to every human being, save two, must be glossed over, so as to appease, without satisfying the curiosity of Styger, and all this was both painful and perplexing. Though this cunning man had lost no time in devising a tale that appeared likely to answer the purpose he desired, he was nevertheless more agitated than he had been for years, when with cautious and stealthy steps he left his own dwelling, and proceeded in search of the Hermit.

Since his unexpected meeting with Father Paul in the market-place, the darkest presentiments of evil had overshadowed his mind; he shrunk with horror from the conviction that the reputation and the credit he had laboured for more than twenty years to win amongst his fellow citizens, should at once be annihilated by this man's disclosures of certain circumstances of his early life, which having occurred at Milan, were utterly unknown and unsuspected in his native place. The evil

tidings contained in the letters brought by Justine, threatened, on the other hand, the destruction of his fortune; and though the Treasurer was little accustomed to anything approaching a superstitious feeling, he felt as he regarded the strange coincidence of this intelligence reaching him at the very moment of Styger's return, that fate was gathering around him the shadows of his early misdeeds, to darken for ever his path to the grave. Had he known how long this man, under the name of Father Paul, had dwelt upon the Righi, without betraying, or accusing him, he might have felt less fear, but he suspected it not; and regarding him as a needy adventurer, who had him in some measure in his power, his only hope was built upon the possibility of purchasing his forbearance by a bribe. How often do men err, when they calculate on managing others by the motives that influence themselves. With the Treasurer money was omnipotent, with the Hermit it was dross!

When Michael Graaf left his chamber for the open streets, and the glittering stars, and cloudless heaven were alone above his head, the clear deep mournful serenity of the night, brought softer thoughts into his mind, and sorrow and remorse were mingled with his selfish terrors.

“I may impose on Styger,” he thought, as he hurried through the moonlit street, “I may impose on the whole world, but I cannot deceive myself. I cannot forget how dearly I have purchased all I hold most precious. Yet what has it brought me but envy, whilst lonely and desolate I go on heaping wealth, I shall leave none I love to enjoy. Every beggar that crosses my path, has some fair lusty urchin to smile on him—and with all my gold, I envy the half-starved wretch from the depths of my soul. Had I been bold enough to set Satan and the church at defiance, and married when I first came hither, I might now have been a happier man—but conscience, con-

science—would to heaven I had sooner listened to its dictates," and with this reflection, he reached the lonely grove at the back of the town appointed by Styger to be their place of meeting.

After following a narrow path amongst the trees for nearly a hundred yards, he came to a small triangular platform enclosed on two sides by lofty masses of rock, fantastically hung with ivy and wild-roses. The hare-bell and the primrose found root in their crannies, and the elm and beech trees, waving on their summits, partially excluded the moonbeams, though one bright ray, as the Treasurer approached, fell on the waters of a fountain, that burst from a fissure in the broad surface of the mossy stone, and after wheeling in glittering eddy for a moment at the base of the cliff, glided away amongst flags, and mallows, into the deep shadow of the brake.

To Michael Graaf's surprise no one was there awaiting him, and after standing nearly

ten minutes with his arms folded on his breast, in no very pleasant train of thought, he had resolved on returning to his home, when he suddenly heard footsteps in a direction, different from that by which he had approached. In another moment the same tall figure that had addressed him in the Weinmarkt, emerged from the brushwood, and stood close at his side, in the full light of the cloudless moon.

“So Michael Graaf,” said the Hermit, “I am glad to find you are punctual, though absence would have availed you little, for our business must have been settled sooner or later, and it matters not to me whether it is done under the shadow of night, or the open glare of day.”

There were strange associations connected in the Treasurer's mind with this man, that made his blood curdle, and his heart grow chill in his presence, though he affected all the calmness he was able, as he replied—“You

talked of a reckoning, methinks, when we met in the town, but though I well remember our acquaintance in Milan, I cannot recall to my mind any money dealings we ever had together."

"Twenty years of prosperity might shorten many men's memories," said Styger coolly, "but perhaps I can give you a few hints to enlighten the past. In the first place, I remember you came to Milan, like many of our countrymen, a very poor young trader, and unlike many, you left it in less time than eighteen months, a very rich one. Perhaps you may have forgotten how you gained your gold, but I have not, Herr Michael."

"I defy you, or any other man to know it," cried Graaf, absolutely trembling from head to foot, under the piercing glance of the Solitary, as with his eyes rivetted on his face, he watched the effect produced by these strange and unwelcome allusions to the past.

"I have no objection to publish the whole transaction," returned the Hermit, with con-

temptuous calmness, "but first, I will repeat the whole story to you, that I may prove I am correct in all particulars."

Though Michael Graaf was not a passionate man, he now, with the utmost difficulty, restrained his wrath, for he felt, though he knew not by what means, that he was in the power of the man who thus sported with his feelings. He had alluded to circumstances he had hitherto believed known only to two other human beings besides himself, both of whom he believed were in the grave. It was a dark transaction, the remembrance of which had embittered many hours of his past life, and although the source of all his affluence and success in life, he often felt with bitterness and remorse, that it had brought, likewise, the curse of a childless and unloved old age. That the secret was buried in his own breast, that he stood fair in the respect and esteem of all classes of men, was at these moments his chief source of consolation, but now, like the spirit

of another age, after a lapse of many years, one suddenly arose whom in his youth he hated—a rival—and an enemy, whom a few words had proved to be deep versed in all the mystery, and he saw at once the absolute necessity of ascertaining the extent of his knowledge, and the purpose to which he meant to apply it.

With a powerful effort, therefore, he suppressed the words of indignation that were rising to his lips, and with as much composure as he could assume, assured Styger he had misunderstood his meaning, for he remembered their former friendship, and could not doubt his good will, though he certainly did wonder that after the lapse of three and twenty years, he should still retain so strong an interest in his affairs.

“Do you remember Clarice Reding?” returned Father Paul, in a deep voice, that had more in it of sorrow, than of anger.

The Treasurer started at this unexpected question, and instantly withdrew his restless

and uneasy gaze from the countenance of Styger, as almost unconsciously he murmured in broken accents, "Remember her? that is a strange demand."

"Gold passes like a scraper over some men's memories, and leaves them smooth as wax," rejoined the Hermit. "Perhaps, then, you have not forgotten the Signor Vergani nor the bargain, by which you sold your helpless victim to his pleasure?"

"Villain," exclaimed the Treasurer, as thrown completely off his guard, and absolutely convulsed with passion, he seized his motionless companion by the collar, "are you a fiend in human likeness, that you come here to mock me with such lies!"

The Solitary calmly released himself from the feeble grasp of the agitated and guilty man, and stepping back a few paces, with that calm dignity, which never forsook him, he replied in the same low voice as before, "It were well indeed for you, Michael Graaf, if all I say

were false ; but you know it is not. I see by your trembling limbs you have some touch of human feeling still about you ! I hear by the tremour of your voice, you have not forgotten the tears and vain supplications of poor Clarice when she knelt at your feet for mercy. Yet you must have had a hard heart Michael, for her voice was very soft, and her tears might have moved a headsman's compassion. But why should I waste words in painting her,—poor, broken hearted creature ! I warrant she has often come to you since then, in the dead of the night, and though you scorned them once, you have heard her prayers, and her lamentations, again and again, till they are graven, as by a burning brand, upon your heart."

"Forbear, forbear !" if you have the feelings of a man, I pray you peace !" murmured the Treasurer, in almost inarticulate accents. But his tormentor still persisted.

"Then what I say is truth ?" he continued.
"You remember it all, it seems ! even her last

words ! eh, Michael ? Her hope,—secret till then,—that you might ere long be a father ? yet you are childless still in your old age.”

“ Oh, spare me ! spare me ! ” cried the Treasurer, in a voice of agony, as with tremulous fingers he grasped the arm of the Hermit.

“ Did you spare me, Michael, when you found my heart in her keeping,” said Father Paul bitterly ; “ did you spare her, after you had made her scorn and reject my true devotion, for your own deceitful proffers of love ? Count out the large hire of your iniquity, coin by coin, and see if that will salve a guilty heart ! Try if your neighbours’ envious praise can take the sting from the forked tongue of conscience ; if bonds, and lands, can supply the place of children to your affections, for these by your own choice, are all your own, but from me, expect no more compassion, than you showed to the poor helpless angel, who, whilst her tears and kisses were on your hand, you sold for filthy lucre.”

“ This answer me at least ! doth she live ? ” eagerly demanded his agonised listener, ere he withdrew the hand with which during the last speech of Father Paul, he had continued as if unconsciously to hold the arm of his upbraider.

“ When three and twenty years have past since you cast her from you, on the wide world, it is somewhat late methinks to make that inquiry,” returned the Hermit, with that calm contempt, that stings far keener than anger, or reproach.

“ When Vergani died,” returned Michael, “ I wrote to Milan to ascertain her fate. But no man knew aught concerning her, and though my researches have since been unwearied, they have proved equally vain ! ”

“ I doubt it not,” answered the Solitary with a bitter smile. “ The hand that casts the blossom on the wind, cannot gather again the withered leaves at pleasure, and it was too much to expect, Michael, when you had made

so large a profit of the misfortunes of poor Clarice, that you were to be left free by her death, to reap another harvest of gold from a second victim."

"Then she lives!" exclaimed the Treasurer in almost breathless accents. "Say that she does, and cruel as you think me, that single word will lift a load of anguish from my heart."

"Ask it of others, not of me," said Father Paul, in a deep stern voice. "I came here to claim the payment of a debt, and not to comfort you."

"Ha, then Herr Styger," said Graaf, with somewhat more composure, "I presume you are one of those thoughtless prodigals, who having wasted youth and fortune in their idle pleasures, make it a trade to hunt out from the dust of time, the little errors of industrious men, who having more reputation than themselves to lose, pay largely for their secrecy. We were once friends, and if you want money, it would have been both more honest, and

more friendly, to have asked for it, in straightforward language."

"Yet men say, that Michael Graaf is more liberal of promises, than money," was the calm reply.

"You are welcome to believe the slander," returned the Treasurer, "but if a hundred florins would serve you, they are yours, provided—"

"I keep your secrets, Michael, I presume you mean," said Father Paul. "A hundred florins say you ! truly the reputation cannot be worth much, which you expect to purchase so cheaply ! But hark you Herr Treasurer, I am not the needy man you take me for, and neither such a paltry sum as a hundred, nor two hundred, nor three hundred florins, shall put a bridle on my tongue."

"By all the Saints then, tell me at once, what you require, and keep me not here shivering till sunrise, with this foolery," cried Graaf, no longer able to restrain his impatience.

"Ten thousand florins ! nothing more, nothing less," was the laconic reply.

"Ten thousand florins ! ten thousand devils ! the man is mad," exclaimed the Treasurer starting back, in utter amazement and dismay.

"Not more than you were when you asked for the same sum from Signor Vergani as the price of your own dishonor," was the rejoinder of the Solitary, and a smile of bitter triumph passed over his features, as he beheld in the moonlight, the expression of consternation and terror these words had excited on the pale face of his listener.

After the lapse of a few moments, during which there was a deep silence between them, Michael in some measure recovered his composure, and with it, his usual sordid train of thought returned.

"You can doubtless only demand such a large sum upon loan," he said, "and pray, may I inquire, what security you are prepared to offer me, if I grant you such a favour ?"

“ You are mistaken, Michael Graaf, when you think that I seek either a loan, a charity, or a bribe,” returned the Hermit sternly. “ I come to claim ten thousand florins from you, as a just debt, which if you refuse to discharge willingly, I must enforce by such means as the law places in my hands.”

“ If this is your only plea for robbing me,” returned Michael, with a low chuckle of satisfaction, “ you are welcome to take what course you please, though you are not likely to be much the richer I suspect, for I can boldly say, I am in no man’s debt ; no not a straw !”

“ Say you so !” said the Hermit, “ but look Herr Michael, here is something that may refresh your memory, and cause you to recant your words.”

With bewildered amazement, and no small terror, the Treasurer watched the movements of his enemy, whilst after uttering these words he fumbled in the folds of his mantle. Greatly to his relief it was not a pistol, as he appre-

hended, that he drew forth from his bosom, but only a small soiled roll of paper. Still, when he lifted his eyes to his countenance, as he deliberately unfolded the packet, its expression was so scornfully triumphant, that the heart of this cowardly, worldly minded man, grew chill with terror. Strange misgivings of evil darkened his mind, but all were far remote from the reality, and no sooner had his eye glanced over the contents of the paper held forth for his perusal by Father Paul into the broad moonlight, than the blood forsook his face, his jaw fell, and he stood like one paralyzed.

The mocking laugh of the Solitary broke loud and harsh upon the silent night, and then all was still. With mute satisfaction this extraordinary man stood contemplating for a time the agony of his victim.

“ It is your own signature you must acknowledge,” he said at length in a voice of scorn

from which his listener would gladly have shrunk into the very bowels of the earth.

"I cannot deny it," said the trembling Michael, "but this receipt was only given to prevent me reclaiming my wife, and retaining the ten thousand florins, I had received from Vergani; but if I left her without molestation, under his protection, it was well understood the debt should never be enforced."

"Have you evidence of that?"

"Vergani pledged his honour,"

"But Vergani is in the grave, and his heir made no such engagement."

Again there was a deep, long silence, till Graaf in feeble accents inquired, if nothing less than the whole amount would satisfy his creditor.

"Not one iota," he replied.

"And you promise silence, as to the transaction, on condition of prompt payment?"

"Most absolute silence!" replied Father

Paul with a smile, the meaning of which greatly perplexed the Treasurer, for he could not divine, that by the purchase of such silence, he inflicted on himself a deeper punishment than even the payment of his bond could effect. He thought he had gained an advantage, whilst he had blighted the fulfilment of the only ardent desire his heart had ever known. But it is ever thus with the wicked, and whilst men marvel at their apparent prosperity, they see not the thousand thorns that gall them in their sunny path, and perceive not under all their splendour, how the poisoned mantle they intend for others, often clings with secret torture around their own perishing limbs.

“Only remember this,” added the Hermit, “the money must immediately be paid, and I shall retain this bond in my possession till the last batz is forthcoming.”

“I know not, on this sudden notice, where I can collect such a sum,” said Graaf, after some consideration. “I learnt only lately

from Berne, that my bankers there are on the brink of failure, and in Lucerne, I cannot command more than a thousand dollars."

"That is your concern, not mine," returned Father Paul; "I will allow you three days, nay a week—"

"I cannot receive remittances in less time," said the Treasurer anxiously interrupting him.

"Well then, a week, if it must be so. At midnight, one week from hence, I will come to your own house for the money, and if it be not then forthcoming, remember that I have evidence besides this paper, to establish the whole of this iniquitous transaction, beyond the shadow of a doubt. If you need me before the expiration of the term, Father Paul is to be found at the Cavern of the Waterfall!"

"Father Paul!" exclaimed Michael with utter amazement, "know you that holy man?"

"Ay, as myself," was the reply, "under that title I have dwelt on the Righi for years. But though my name is altered, my character

is unchanged. You knew me once Michael—I am still the same, and never make a resolution I do not keep to the letter. Be punctual, and beware.”

So saying the Hermit again secured the precious bond within his doublet, and carelessly flinging the wide folds of his mantle around him, departed without other salutation, by the same path he had descended from the woods, leaving the heart-stricken Treasurer to find his way alone to his own dwelling.

CHAPTER VI.

Come let us sup betimes ; that afterwards
We may digest our complots in some form.

SHAKSPEARE—RICHARD III.

DARK and perplexed were the feelings of Michael Graaf, as he retraced his steps. The grey light of morning was already breaking with serene tranquillity above the hills ; the voice of chanticleer gave joyous echo to the shepherds' dogs, beyond the walls of the still sleeping city, and the fresh breeze ushering with fragrance the approaching day, flew cool

and reviving through the silent streets. But it brought no balm to that distracted man ; the fire that consumed him was within, and the dews and the airs of heaven are alike powerless to cool the burning brow of the sinner, till the performance of its laws, and a belief in its words of promise, have imparted peace to the soul.

But Graaf had never heeded either, and now when the shadows of his own deeds were gathering around him to his destruction, and fate, as if weary of his prosperity, had snapt its silken string, he had nothing to turn to for support, but the same crafty, cunning mind, that had been the invisible cause of all his present trouble.

Surprised and horror stricken for a time, by the unexpected disclosures of the Solitary, the better parts of his nature, his affection and tender feelings had been called into activity by the shock, yet it was only to aggravate the the pangs of remorse ; it was only to make him

feel with agony how he had shaken off every tie, for the love of gold; how he had bartered even the object of his early love for money, that had not, that never could sear his heart against the keen stings of conscience.

All his hours of bitter repentance, all his vain anxiety during his years of fruitless search for his early victim,—all the withering sense of sin and craving for affection, that had haunted him since then, were at once concentrated before him, by Styger's upbraidings, and though habitually a coward, willingly would he at that moment have laid down his life to have escaped from the agony of his own overcharged brain.

But it is never long till the mental activity produced by extraordinary excitement gives way to the ordinary habits of the mind, and when the Treasurer was seated in his own chamber, quickly recovering from his agitation, he reverted to his usual trains of thought and calculation. His own sense of guilt was

nothing strange; he had in some measure become accustomed to it, but the danger of exposure was a new and unexpected evil, and he saw clearly, must be averted at every cost. Though to part with ten thousand florins, was like taking a slice from his heart, it was at first consolatory to feel assured, that for this sum the silence of the Hermit could be purchased; but he was no sooner soothed by this reflection, than his love of money resumed the mastery over every other feeling, and he began to devise the possibility of eluding the payment altogether.

The threatened failure of his bankers would rob him of nearly double that amount, and though a rich man, his cash was so lent out on bonds and annuities, that only a very small sum was at his immediate disposal. Unlike the great cities of a mercantile country, Lucerne presented no means of accommodation to a man under such circumstances, and Michael felt, moreover, that if he borrowed, he must borrow

with the utmost privacy, or his credit would be for ever destroyed; and there was only one person of whom he could make such a demand. That person was Carl Staffer, Justine's wealthy lover, from whom, on the strength of his passion for his niece, the Treasurer had already obtained such large sums at a small interest, to re-lend upon high annuities, that he felt his chance of success was very doubtful, unless he could induce the girl not only to receive his addresses, but at once to give her promise to become his wife. He loved Justine almost as tenderly as if she had been his own child; he fully intended to make her his heir, and having for some time past had no immediate want of Staffer's assistance, he had forborne to press her acceptance of a weak, passionate man, with whom he well knew a union could only prove a source of misery to a girl like Justine.

But whatever his feelings, selfishness was at all times the leading impulse of his actions, and under the pressure of necessity, he speedily

determined to cast aside every consideration of his niece's happiness, should an appeal to Staffer's purse be necessary to make up the price of his reputation. He resolved, however, without delay, to despatch a trusty messenger to Berne, to withdraw his money from the bankers there, if the declared failure of the house had not yet deprived him of this resource. He was a man, who when he had once decided on his plan of action, never delayed a moment in its execution ; and ere he tasted food that morning, he had written the letters necessary for the settlement of this important business, and despatched them by a confidential clerk, to whom he gave the strictest injunction to return at every hazard before the expiration of five days.

This done, the scheme for eluding the payment to Styger altogether, again recurred to his mind, and eagerly and anxiously, yet with the utmost caution did he revolve it again and again.

It was connected with an affair of such vast, such vital import, not only to himself, but to all his fellow citizens, that some lingering feelings of honour, and his natural cowardice, had hitherto prevented his pursuing it. Vast offers of personal advantage had been made him by men who well knew how to administer to the besetting sins of their agents, but they depended on such a doubtful issue, and their fulfilment was still so remote, that the risk in his former estimation more than counter-balanced the reward, and after rejecting the bribes of those who sought to make him their tool, he had for several days given the business no further consideration.

But his position was now altered, and when he again examined the details of the schemes proposed to him, he clearly saw therein, the means of emancipation from all his present difficulties. It was nevertheless a dangerous measure from which he shrank, and he resolved to essay every other expedient for his extrica-

tion, ere he finally placed his fortunes and his life, on the chances of this desperate experiment.

He consequently determined to keep Justine under his own eye, and lost no time in informing Dame Muller that her return to the Righi was unavoidably prevented ; his next care was to prepare the girl herself to receive the addresses of Staffer with favour and encouragement, and for this purpose he covered his perplexed countenance with a mantle of smiles, and proceeded to meet her in the common parlour at the usual hour of their morning meal, with a demeanour, as smooth and bland, as if not a shadow of care had intruded, even on his dreams of the past night.

But Justine's suspicions had been too powerfully excited by the words of Father Paul in the Weinmarkt, and she was too well versed in the character of her uncle to be thus easily deceived. She had heard him astir in his chamber till a late hour of the previous

night, and in spite of all his caution, his stealthy steps had reached her ear as he went abroad, and she had watched him with surprise from her window gliding across the market place when all but themselves were wrapt in profound repose. She had noted his return, and now when they met, in spite of his dissimulation, she plainly saw by his more than usual paleness, and the darkened rim around his lustreless eyes, that he had passed not only a sleepless, but a troubled night.

But though free to talk on other matters, she had been early taught to make no allusion to her uncle's affairs, and to be contented with his affection, without seeking his confidence. But all err greatly who expect to win the one, without bestowing the other.

Michael Graaf was a narrow minded man, and because women were unskilled in the calculations and trickeries of commerce, the science on which he piqued himself, he regarded them as the mere creatures of feeling made to ad-

minister to the little selfish wants and pleasures of men. Ignorance and conceit, equally contributed to confirm him in an error so flattering to his vanity and his love, and' whilst he clung to Justine with the affection of habit, the gentle submissiveness of her conduct, had given him no reason to regard her as an exception to what he considered the general character of her sex.

Utterly ignorant of the strength of her mind, and the quickness of her perception, it would be difficult to say, whether he would have been the most surprised or mortified, had he that morning, when preparing to use her as his tool, been made acquainted with the deep insight she seemed intuitively to possess into the mysteries of his own breast.

Some men are gifted with a peculiar faculty, that sits in judgment on every image awakened by the most remote association in their brain, and no motive of their own actions, however disguised or distant, eludes their perception ;

but Michael Graaf was not thus endowed; he was no philosopher, and hypocrite as he was, Justine knew the impulses of many of his actions, of which he was himself unconscious.

Aware of his watching, she greatly mistrusted the smiles with which he greeted her, and was convinced he had some secret purpose to accomplish, when he informed her, he had determined, that for the present she should remain at Lucerne.

Much as she longed to be on the mountain, where no impediment existed to prevent her daily meeting with Walther Stanz, she was so accustomed to obey her uncle in all things, as not to venture the slightest opposition to his declared pleasure; and without daring to question him, she awaited with a heavy heart some further explanation of this sudden and unwelcome arrangement.

But whether from a consciousness of his own dark schemes, or a feeling of affection for his gentle niece, Michael Graaf vainly struggled

during the progress of their meal, to prepare her for the renewal of Staffer's courtship. Though a strictly sober man, he generally eat largely, for without excess, he indulged freely in such pleasures, but though contrary to his wont he swallowed more than half a bottle of Burgundy, it did not escape the quick eye of Justine, that his appetite had entirely left him. He cleared his throat,—he made several ineffectual efforts to converse on indifferent subjects, but speedily relapsed into silence, till as if annoyed by his own thoughts, he swallowed another bumper of Burgundy, and hastily pushing away his loaded plate, arose to leave the room.

As he did so, quick and heavy steps were audible in the passage, and ere he could reach the door it was flung open, and Staffer with his left arm in a sling, and his countenance inflamed with rage, stood before him.

“Herr Graaf,” he cried in an angry voice, “I have come to have a clear understanding

with you. I am not a man to be made a fool of, whatever you may think: I have paid largely for your good will, Herr Treasurer, and deuce an advantage I have gained by it, that I can see; but you will not humbug me any longer, I can tell you. If all the return I am to have for my money, is to dangle at a maid's apron-string, and get my bones broken by every paltry bondman that drives goats on the Righi, then I have come to tell you, Michael Graaf, that you and your niece may go to Jericho for ought I care, only you must give me back my gold."

"What does all this mean?" exclaimed the Treasurer, with nufeigned amazement.

"It means neither more nor less, than that you have told me a pack of confounded falsehoods, old gentleman," rejoined Staffer. "You swore that nothing but the girl's modesty made her shy of my company, whilst all the time she is gallanting with a scoundrel that richly deserves a threshing, and you'll

not make me believe you were such a fool as not to know what is the common talk of the Canton."

"We will discuss this business in another place," said Graaf, anxiously interposing to check a discourse he feared might effectually ruin all his prospects, if carried further in the presence of Justine.

"No, I am obliged to you!" exclaimed the farmer, roughly, "there is neither time nor place like the present. If the girl has cunning enough to throw dust in your eyes, it is fitting I should tell you that I wo'nt submit, after all that has passed between you and me, to be made a jest of, and scorned for another lover—a base, low-born, impudent hind, who not contented with insulting me whenever we met under her window, or elsewhere, had the audacity yesterday to kill my favorite hound before my face, and knock me down afterwards, when I was on the point of giving him a drubbing for his pains. If the fellow had been

an honest Burgher, the matter would have been very different,—but a slave,—a priest's goat-driver,—a paltry scrivener,—I will have revenge, or I am not worthy to hold the lands my ancestors won by the edge of the sword. You shall make me amends, I have sworn it, Michael Graaf, or give me my gold again."

"What the money you lent me for your own advantage, for fair interest, and on good security, can have to do with your bruises, I divine not," returned the Treasurer, "nor have you told me yet, who is the author of this mischief."

"Who should it be but Walther Stanz," returned Staffer, doggedly.

"Justine, can this be true?" demanded Graaf, gazing with anger and amazement, on the blushing and downcast countenance of his niece.

"Let her deny it if she dare," cried the farmer, without waiting for her reply, "the whole mountain knows it, as well as I, and

people marvel how a wise man like you, Herr Michael, could allow her to consort with such a paltry knave, when a man of wealth and credit, and honourable family like myself, is scorned and set at naught."

"There must be some mistake," said the merchant, in a conciliating voice.

"No, Herr Graaf, there is no mistake. You shall find that I am not twice to be made a fool of. Do you think I have not heard how at the last fête of St. Magdelaine she said I danced like a showman's bear; though I defy her to point out a better leg than mine in the four cantons. She has found fault with the cut of my doublet, and said, moreover, that my purse is longer than my wit, and my ears longer than either; she has compared my head to a scarlet poppy, and my voice to a whetting stone. It is not to be borne, I tell you. I have stripped my orchard of its best apples, and my dairy of its fattest cheeses to content her. Not a head of game did I bring down all winter, but sh

had the picking of it, and yet in spite of all this, a paltry fellow is preferred, who has not so much as a cherry-stone to call his own."

"Nay, nay, Staffer, my worthy fellow, you take this matter too seriously. Justine, my girl, go to your own room, I will come to talk to you before long," said the Treasurer; and with the speed of a swallow the girl instantly obeyed. Her uncle was no sooner left alone with his guest, than placing a chair for Staffer, and seating himself on another close by, he resumed the conversation.

"You tell me strange news, my friend, that distresses me greatly," he resumed as soon as matters were thus arranged; "your manly frankness is beyond all praise, for unless someone like you, has the honour and courage to speak plainly, how is it possible that a man whose time and faculties are all engrossed in business, can know any thing of the freaks and fancies of a giddy girl? But take my word for it, I will see you justice done. You

you suspect she has another lover, I think you said."

"Suspect! I can swear to it!" cried Staffer sullenly. "She has neither a word, nor a smile, for any other man on the Righi, but Walther Stanz. They are always together. They were together yesterday, when the fellow presuming on her favour, had the impudence to slay my dog, and knock me down, as I told you. If Dame Muller does not look sharp after them, the mischief won't end there I promise you."

"All this is very bad, and my cousin is a very silly woman," said the Treasurer, "but I know she likes you!"

"What matter for the old one's liking me if the young one does not," said his guest.

"You are too hasty, as I told you before," persisted Michael, "and a man of your sense should not heed the foolish things his neighbours repeat about a giddy girl. Justine is an only child, you know—petted, and indulged

till she is a little self-willed, but she has a kind heart, and though she may sometimes flirt more than she ought, with other people, I am certain at the bottom, she likes no one so well as yourself."

"She gave strong proof of that when she called me a dancing bear," returned the farmer sullenly.

"It was all a mistake, depend upon it."

"A mistake! truly the whole matter is a mistake from beginning to end!" cried Staffer, his face flushing deeper and deeper with anger as he proceeded, "it was a mistake when I was such an unaccountable fool, as to think of this madcap girl—it was a mistake when I listened to all your confounded promises and humbug, and it was the greatest mistake of all, when I lent you my hard cash in hopes of securing your favour, which to judge by the way things are going, was not worth a rush. But give me back my money, and I will have done with the whole business, the girl is wel-

come to wed a bondman, or a goat-herd, or whom she pleases for me."

"Nay, Staffer, it is very unlike yourself, to be beaten off the field in this manner by a paltry shepherd," said the wily Treasurer, "after Stanz and you have come to blows too; what will the world say?"

"I care not—but what can I do?" said the farmer, with a look of mingled perplexity and annoyance.

"Anything—everything, if you will only have patience, and trust in me; a man of your position, wealth and influence, will not surely submit to be outwitted by a beggar like this Walther Stanz. Justine has only been trying to make you jealous depend upon it, for I have heard her speak very handsomely of you when nobody was by."

"But has she spoken thus?" enquired Staffer seating himself beside his host.

"Aye, truly has she," he returned, "and

moreover she has often declared in my hearing, that she would never wed any man whose love she had not made thorough trial of."

"Surely she has tried mine with a vengeance," growled the farmer.

"But it is time this folly should now have an end," replied Graaf, "and if you are disposed to trust in my promises, and press your suit, I will engage you shall be married before the month is out."

"I can hardly think so," said the suitor, but though he shook his head, a smile of gratified vanity played around the corners of his mouth.

Graaf saw his advantage, and continued—"You should see yourself, as others see you Staffer, and be less incredulous; but what I have promised I will fulfil; Justine is now in my house, and shall not leave it till she is your wife, I give you my honour. Master Walther Stanz shall find no admission, you shall have

the field all to yourself. And if you do not tell her and send her, you are not the man I want you for."

Scatter laughed very silly.

"To be frank, George," he said with somewhat more composure, "I am not a man to whom it is hard to be false with impunity. I am not in the position of being in a rooming with this fellow. And if the girl between is preferring him there, and he does not want the matter settled. In now you know the truth. I thought you were thinking he was Michael, but if you are serious and want to see him."

"That you may," returned the Treasurer.

"Justice will soon forget him. I will go the next day to work. He would not be here after all, and a little factory with them would be longer like a longer time."

"But Justice is in the house. He is not just as he is in the house. I have that factory, but he has to make for it. I would not know

my life to win her, but I have lost all hope, either of softening her heart, or tickling her vanity."

"Then you must work on her fears," said Graaf, though the words almost stuck in his throat.

"She is very brave," was Staffer's laconic reply.

"Aye, externally perhaps but depend upon it, women are all weak at heart," rejoined his host, "and there are many ways to work them to our purposes."

"Aye, but she is your niece, your own favorite niece," returned his astonished listener.

"Did I seek to do her any injury, you might remind me of that," said Graaff, quietly, "but even at the worst, if her heart is given to this Walther Stanz, which I do not believe, I am only making her accept good fortune against her will; and whatever foolish fancies she may have in her head now, she will own

before long, that she was the luckiest girl in the Canton to get you for a husband ; the old, in my opinion, are fully justified in putting a little constraint upon the young, when it is for their benefit."

" Well, there may be some truth in that," said the other, stroking his chin, " but depend on it, the maiden will be hard to deal with, for she has a devil of a spirit, and unless you are prepared to go all lengths we had better never begin."

" We will try gentle means first," said Michael.

" All loss of time," muttered Staffer.

" If I fail, you must exert your powers of persuasion."

" I am tired of that work," returned the farmer, who, during this interview, had shewn more keenness amidst his vanity and his folly, than the Treasurer had hitherto given him credit for ; " but as you say, Michael Graaf, you have the best right to choose a

husband for your own niece, and prevent her making a fool of herself. I have paid largely, with the understanding that she is to be your heiress, and I will have no half measures."

"You speak plainly, Staffer, and so must I," returned the Treasurer, after a short pause.

"You are for going further in this matter than I bargained for. I promised you my favour, but compulsion we took no account of."

"And I hope we may have no need of it cried his guest," though by all the Saints I have gone so far, I am determined to win the girl by fair means or foul. So now you know the truth."

"Without my assistance, I defy you to do it."

"But you have promised it"

"Aye, if fair means will do—if not—"

"What then?"

"I have need of ten thousand florins."

"And long may you have need of them, fo aught I care," cried Staffer, starting impatiently from his seat.

"Then, Justine is free to reject you whenever she thinks fit, that is all," said Graaf, with infinite tranquillity.

"If so, I require the money I have already lent you be forthwith returned."

"In six months from your notice, as your bond requires, you shall be duly paid; but do nothing rashly, Staffer; you may repent it hereafter, for there is not another maiden in the Canton with prospects like Justine's—and you will be the laughing-stock of all your rivals, high and low."

"By heaven, Michael Graaf, you are a shrewd fellow to deal with," returned Staffer, after a short pause, during which the remembrance of Justine's beauty, the Treasurer's inheritance, and above all of Walther Stanz, had their due weight upon his impetuous mind. "But ten thousand florins is a round sum. Where do you expect me to find it at a minute's notice?"

"Mortgage your lowland farm, and for the

next twelvemonth I will engage to give you ten per cent. for the money."

"What, you give ten per cent, Michael! I thought you only took it," returned Staffer, with a coarse laugh; "you must be in urgent need, indeed, if you can dream of giving such interest."

"I am in urgent need, which I would not confess to any other living man, Staffer," said his host in a low voice; "but I know you will not betray me. I am in your power, let that be sufficient warrant to you, that if you assist me to this amount I will aid you, heart and soul, and in spite of every earthly obstacle, you shall marry Justine in five days."

"It is a loan, Michael."

"A loan, and at ten per cent. I have said so!"

"To be advanced to you on my wedding day?"

"That very hour! I cannot wait a moment longer, than the fifth day."

"And should Justine prove obstinate, then all I formerly advanced must be refunded."

"Agreed!" said Graaf.

"Then ten thousand florins you shall have, and here is my hand upon the bargain," returned the farmer, and grasping that of the Treasurer in his huge hard fingers, he shook it long and violently,

Michael in spite of the iniquity of his bargain, felt greatly relieved by the prospect it afforded of his being enabled, in spite of every hazard to meet the demands of Father Paul, at the appointed time.

Keen witted men have an infinite contempt for women. Their imaginations, and high toned feeling they regard as mere folly, and Michael thought all more or less foolish, who did not worship money, so that though his affection for Justine was great, he had little compunction for thus agreeing to force her into a marriage against her inclination, as according to his views of things, he was thereby

advancing her real interest, and as to love—though capable himself of strong attachment, he sincerely believed it was all moonshine, and that after a weeks courtship, a girl would like any man that offered to her, if he was neither absolutely old, nor absolutely ugly.

Still he had some suspicion that Justine was not exactly like other young women of her age, and he had some little misgivings that matters might not go quite so smoothly as he desired; but he strove to banish such ideas, and as he thought it expedient that no time should be lost, he invited Staffer to return that evening to supper.

With this agreement they parted; the one blinded by headstrong passions to the wickedness of the course he had been tempted to engage in, the other so skilful in finding excuses to himself for such trifling errors of expediency, that his seared conscience was perfectly tranquil.

CHAPTER VII.

" I beseech you, Sir ; Harm not yourself with vexation ; I am senseless of your wrath ; a touch more rare subdues all pangs, all fears."

SHAKESPEARE'S CYMBELINE.

JUSTINE had no sooner escaped from the presence of her uncle and Staffer, than instead of proceeding to her chamber as she had been commanded by the former, she flew with speed from the house, and hurried towards the Kappel Brucke.

The time had already arrived when Walther had promised to meet her at the landing place

with his boat, and though it was now out of her power to return with him, she longed to tell him all that had passed since they parted, and to give him warning of the persecution she truly anticipated was prepared for her.

New and strange feelings were in her heart, as she hurried through the streets; fears such as she had never before known; anguish such as she had never before felt; yet amidst all, there was a strength and joy that like inspiration winged her steps. Walther was awaiting her—Walther was ready to be her adviser, her consoler, her support, amidst every trial, and to encounter all for him, she was willing and prepared.

Since dawn her whole thoughts had been engaged in anticipating the approaching delight of their meeting; in fancy she had told him her story again and again, and his loved voice had replied in words such as she longed to hear, but this young creature had yet to learn, how rarely our wishes find fruition here, how

rarely happiness comes at the expected hour, or in such lovely guise as we have decked her.

She reached the bridge. The unclouded sun was at its meridian, the glowing air seemed tremulous with heat, and a few children at play in the shallow water, were the only human beings to be seen along the margin of the Lake.

Eagerly did Justine glance around, but Walther was not there, neither was his boat at the landing place.

Shading her eyes with her hand, she looked long and earnestly over the broad glittering expanse of waters, but not a sail fluttered on the liquid mirror.

At first the agony of her disappointment was very keen, but she was a young and joyous being, to whom life, and love, and hope were new, and the depression of her spirit was brief, for she had no mistrust of Walther. Yet for the time her suffering was intense, and bending down her head on the wooden parapet of the

- bridge, she felt as the inexperienced are very prone to feel, when the shadows of sorrow first darken their path; that there was no more joy, or brightness in the world for her.

Whilst she thus yielded to these sad presentiments, silently and unseen by the weeping girl, a boat darted from behind a woody headland and drew up beneath the spot where she leaned.

“Are you waiting for Walther, Justine?” enquired a female voice, when the side of the little bark at length grated against the bridge.

“Ah, Lena is it you?” cried the girl starting up at the well known sound, by which she she instantly recognized the mother of him on whom her thoughts were bent.

She was a plain, middle aged woman, whose skin was hardened more by toil and exposure to the vicissitudes of climate, than by age. Her attire though as picturesque as that of all other women of her province, was poor and weather stained, but her movements were free,

and even graceful; and though her plain features bore no resemblance to her son's, they were heightened by an expression so benevolent, that none could look on them without feeling, as if by intuition, the worth and kindness of this simple peasant.

Justine, whose greatest delight when a child, had ever been to steal away to her chalet, and whose earliest pleasures were joined in memory with Lena's milking pails, and Lena's spinning wheel, and Lena's songs, loved her as if she had been her own mother, and even had Walther been utterly forgotten would have hailed her appearance with joy.

But now she instantaneously felt she came with a message from her lover, yet she did not name him, when she eagerly questioned Lena what had brought her thither.

"I come at Walther's bidding," she replied with a kind smile. "Truly, Justine, he was sadly disappointed when Dame Muller sent word by Father Paul, that your uncle would

not let you return to the Righi, and I believe he would have come at all hazards if the good Hermit had not been there to prevent him. But he was wanted at the Hospital, it seems, to finish some long writing, that could not be done without him. Yet, poor fellow, before he went thither, he begged me so hard to come and tell you why he had failed to keep his promise, that as soon as I had turned out my cheese, and scoured my bowls, I left them to dry in the sun, and set off with all speed down the mountain. He thought, he said, that in spite of the Treasurer's message, there was a chance you might return with me."

"Would I durst!" replied Justine, "for tell him, Staffer has already been to my uncle, with complaints of his treatment yesterday, and I tremble to think of what may follow. Tell him, dear Lena, that in all my life I never was so wretched as now—and that in spite of Father Paul, he must come down as soon as possible to see me, if it be only for a minute."

"Where will he find you?" enquired the shepherdess, "surely your rich uncle will not like such company in his house?"

"No, no, anywhere but there!" cried Justine eagerly. "I could meet him in the dusk on the shadowy side of the cathedral. But I must see him somewhere; for, oh Lena, that detestable Staffer is still determined to marry me, and I fear the Treasurer will be persuaded to do just what he pleases."

"He cannot force you against your inclination to wed a fellow like that," said Lena, "every creature knows him to be a hard drinker and the worst temper in the four Cantons. Shall I send Father Paul to interfere for you? they say few men can stand firm against his reproving voice."

"I fancy Lena it will be best to trust to God, and the strength he may please to bestow," was the girl's reply. "Men threaten boldly, but there is a powerful arm doubtless,

ever supports the weak in their time of need, or women would be slaves indeed."

"Aye, Justine, you had ever a brave spirit," returned the shepherdess, "and if Walther can help you, you know as well as I, there is not an honest heart, nor a stronger arm on this side the Jura."

"But it would be cruel to involve him in my troubles," said Justine with a deep sigh. "I brought him into sad danger yesterday, and I know not where it may end, for Staffer swears revenge against him."

"Never heed him," replied Lena, "he is a loud boaster, when he has swallowed half a bottle of kirchenwasser, but he has not the heart when he is sober, to lay a finger on a noble fellow like my Walther."

"Say you so, my good dame," cried a voice that made both the women start with dismay, as the Farmer himself leaned over the side of the bridge close to Justine's elbow, "but I

would not advise you to be too sure, that as all you may tell another story before the end of the week. Fine doings by the Saints. It is time truly my pretty daniel you had a mind to look sharply after you, if there are your tricks. Yet your precious lover methinks, might have been more gallant, than to send his mother as his deputy."

"You have no right, and you never shall have, to meddle in my affairs," returned Justine drawing herself up to her full height, and eyeing the intruder with infinite scorn. "My uncle may tolerate your company if he pleases, but I tell you once for all, that I will not."

"I am obliged to you," replied Esther, with assumed tranquillity, though her face flushed scarlet with anger; "but I cannot understand why you and I should not be better friends. I think you the prettiest girl in Lacombe, and I have told you so a hundred times: and for my own part, though I say it that should not

say it, there is not another woman but yourself in the Canton that would not be proud to be honoured by my commendation."

"Then, let them, in the name of fortune, keep all your compliments to themselves," cried the girl, impatiently, "only do'nt torment me with your folly."

"Folly, indeed ! you had better beware what you are saying. This impertinence may prove worse for you. Folly, indeed ! I fancy when Walther Stanz tells you the same story, you take it as quietly as a pike does a gudgeon. His mother came down, I suppose, to spread his baits for him, but the lines are all broken, and Dame Lena, the sooner you are gone the better, for you shall have no love messages in my hearing to carry to your hopeful son, I promise you."

"You come too late !" said Justine, with a laugh of infinite scorn, and as Lena again spread the sail, and pushed her boat into the

deep water, she pronounced the word, "remember," in a calm, clear voice, and then turned to retrace her steps to her home.

But however rapid the movement of Justine, Staffer, with unwearied perseverance, kept pace with her, and anxious to avail himself of so admirable an opportunity of urging his suit, sought, with all the vulgar eloquence of which he was master, to convince her of his attachment, and her exceeding folly in not being duly sensible of its value, and the great honour he did her, by offering to make her his wife.

To all this the agitated girl made no reply; though much was said, that both irritated and pained her, she only hurried home the faster, and in utter silence reached her uncle's door, just as the house-keeper, Babette, was coming forth in search of her.

"Ah, Mademoiselle Justine, I am glad you are there," said the venerable cook, "for your uncle wants you, and dinner is nearly ready, and there is a strange gentleman has been with

him in his room for the last hour, and you had better go in, and put on your holyday skirt, for I warrant the smell of my kitchen will persuade him to stay and taste its fare."

"Do you not know who he is, Babette?" enquired her young mistress.

"Not I indeed," she returned; "he is quite a gentleman like, and things ought to be more decent than ordinary; but if I stay prating here, he will think the Treasurer has the worst cook in Lucerne. But patience me! I smell the ducks burning already!" and without further salutation, the old woman disappeared into the innermost depths of the gloomy offices.

"Justine you shall not escape me, till you have answered me!" cried Staffer seizing the maiden by the hand, as she sprang within the threshold. "Were I your hound, you could not treat me worse."

"Release me Herr Staffer! this is no place for such conduct," she cried, endeavouring vainly to free herself from his iron hold.

"I will not release you!" returned the farmer whose anger was now excited to an ungovernable pitch, "every place is alike to me, and when you turn a deaf ear to all I say, you cannot expect me to be very complying, I love you Justine! I have told you so a hundred times, at least, and I should have no more spirit than a snail, if I bore your insulting slights any longer with patience. You shall hear me; and I am determined you shall not only hear me, but answer me, and moreover I give you warning, that much mischief may ensue if you do not promise before we part, to become my wife."

"Coward, do you threaten!" exclaimed the girl turning towards her persecutor, with a glance of haughty indignation that for a moment startled and abashed him. "You know little of Justine Weber if you expect by such base means to bend her to your purposes. You talk of love, whilst you take the fittest means to provoke my hatred. Release me Herr Staffer,

or I will call my uncle to chastise your insolence."

The farmer laughed aloud.

"Your uncle," he replied, "do you trust to such a rotten plank as that old usurer? I might drag you to the altar, and thrust a ring in spite of you, upon this struggling hand, before he durst say me nay! he loves his gold too well, Justine! and would sell you any day to the highest bidder; so for once take an honest fellow's advice, and consent without further fuss and nonsense to marry me peaceably, like a sensible girl, and I will take you out of the old rascal's clutches at once. Worse may betide you, if you do not; that is all I can tell you, so make an end of this coquetry and nonsense, and promise at once to be my wife."

"Never! though death were to be the consequence of my denial!" exclaimed Justine.

"Then by the Saints you shall be made to repent your obstinacy to the last moment of

your life!" cried Staffer in a voice almost inarticulate with passion, but ere he had finished the sentence, the maiden by one violent effort freed her hand from his grasp, and darting into the house, shut the door between them, before he was aware of her purpose.

With the speed of lightning she rushed up the stairs, to her own chamber, and double locked and bolted the door, when she reached it, before she could feel that she was safe from pursuit.

She then listened anxiously; but all was still, and the prolonged tranquillity at length convinced her that Staffer had departed without seeking admission. Yet she was convinced that his persecution was only deferred, and with a beating and a troubled heart she sat down and endeavoured to recall her scattered thoughts, and consider by what means she could best avoid the repetition of the insulting proposals to which she had that morning been

exposed. When she remembered the way in which Staffer had spoken of her uncle it filled her with alarm, for in the depth of her own heart, there was a feeling that likewise warned her, that little reliance could be placed on his support, should the farmer persist in his pursuit. From Walther, under such circumstances, she could claim no assistance; but she deeply felt that the happiness of his future life, as well as her own, depended on the result of her present trials. No one else could stretch out a hand to save her from her fearful and perilous position; there was nothing but the protection of heaven and her own strength of mind on which she could depend for safety. She trusted that the rectitude of the course she had chosen would ensure her the former, and after a short and fervent prayer she felt a consciousness of mental energy, and powerful determination, that greatly relieved her young heart from the heavy burthen that had previously depressed it,



and seemed to assure her, that whatever the unprincipled might compel her to endure, yet that strength would be given her successfully to resist their persecution.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sole and all comfortless he wastes away
Old age, untimely posting ere his day.
Beneath the sun prolong they yet their breath,
Or range the house of darkness and of death?

POPE'S HOMER—ODYSSEY, BOOK, XV.

WHEN Michael Graaf entered his dining parlour to meet the unknown guest, old Babette had announced, he beheld a man whom he had no recollection of having ever before seen. He was well dressed, and had a certain air of military superiority, which induced the Treasurer to pay him the most respectful attention.

He well knew that military men are often in want of money, and very careless as to the rate of interest they may be required to pay, so trusting to Staffer's promises, and hoping all things from his mission to Berne, he inwardly chuckled at the prospect of disposing of any surplus cash to advantage.

"Good morning, sir," he said with a very low bow, as he advanced into the room, attired in his best brown suit, with broad cambric ruffles and shirt frill, his hair well powdered, and large silver buckles in his shoes. "You are a stranger in Lucerne, I think, I may presume to say, sir, a traveller, perhaps, sir—come with recommendations, no doubt, sir—pray be seated."

The officer returned his salutation, and without speaking, took the chair he offered; but when both were seated, he still remained silent, as if doubtful in what manner to begin the conversation.

Michael fidgetted on his chair; he hardly

knew what to say next, for if the stranger wanted money, to make an offer of it, was greatly to lessen its value, and what else he could want, was beyond his comprehension. Had he been a Frenchman he might have suspected — but he was not a Frenchman ; though he had a travelled and polished air, he was a Swiss in feature and language, and moreover, though Graaf felt convinced he had never before seen him, there was something in his countenance that recalled another face to his mind, which he never remembered without feelings of a painful nature.

He wished the interview at an end, though without knowing why, and after regarding the stranger with half bewildered curiosity, a few moments longer, he abruptly inquired, to what cause he was indebted for the honour of his visit .

“ The subject, Herr Graaf, on which I seek information,” he replied, “ is one no doubt which it will be very painful to you to discuss ;

but as time subdues all our feelings, more or less, I presume after the lapse of twenty years my recurring to it needs no excuse."

The dismay and amazement of the Treasurer was gradually augmented whilst the stranger thus addressed him, till when he finished his brief speech, the old man's blood absolutely ran chill with apprehension, and he had scarcely breath to stammer out—"be more explicit, sir, if you expect me to answer you."

"I will be more explicit, if you wish it," said his guest with stern tranquillity. "Years ago you had a wife, Michael Graff?"

"A wife, sir!" exclaimed his listener, turning deadly pale.

"Aye, a wife! the world knows it not—but I do," retorted the stranger. "There are many in Milan who remember it; her name was Clarice Reding."

"I once knew such a woman," muttered his host, "and if others did so, they must equally remember her death."

"They remember the report of it," said the unknown, "they remember likewise there was a strange mystery attending it, and I am here to demand its explanation."

"By the Saints, sir, you have infinite assurance," cried the Treasurer, "to presume without leave or license, to tear open the wounds of a stranger's affliction, and not content with that, to meddle in private affairs of the deepest and most heart-rending nature to him, but with which you cannot have the most remote concern."

"You have the character of a shrewd and cautious man of business, Herr Graaf, and you must know the world too well, to believe, for a moment, that I would do either. Can you pretend to deny that this young woman was your wife?"

"I am not aware of any right you have to ask the question."

"The right of a brother," replied Aloys Reding, sternly, "and if truth has not utterly

forsaken your lips, I abjure you, by every thing sacred, to tell me all you know of my poor sister's sad destiny?"

For a moment Graaf appeared absolutely stunned by surprise and dismay. He felt as if his early sins were rising up like serpents on every side, to sting him to despair, but he endeavoured to master his agitation, and assured Reding, in tremulous accents, that if he really were the brother of poor Clarice, he had nothing to reveal to him, but the story of an imprudent connexion, equally unfortunate for them both, which had ended in her premature death.

"And she left one child, Herr Graaf?" said the officer, after listening to his stammering explanations, with the strongest expression of contempt, on his fine ingenuous features.

"Not to my knowledge," returned the Treasurer, in a low and troubled voice.

"That is strange," returned Reding, "for that was reported likewise."

“How—when—where, did you hear such a tale? Willingly would I give half I possess to be convinced of its truth!” exclaimed Graaf, with fearful animation, and his heavy countenance was so strongly agitated, that Reding for once believed he spoke the genuine feelings of his soul.

“Yet you refuse to acknowledge the mother as your wife?” persisted the officer.

“Torture me not by this strange questioning,” cried the Treasurer! “Does the child live, or does it not? Answer me that, and then I may be more explicit.”

“It is strange that a father should be compelled to seek such knowledge from another,” said Reding, watching with amazement that every moment redoubled the agitation of his extraordinary host.

“It may seem strange—doubtless it is so!” he returned, “but my connexion with Clarice was one of no ordinary nature. She deserted me before her death—if I must reveal her

shame. She sought another's protection before she became a mother ; I heard of her death, but my resentment was not appeased, and I confess to my disgrace, that I made no inquiries after our child. I was young then,—full of hopes and ambition ; I am old now, and have tasted all the bitter fruits of life, to the very core, and would I give to have a child to call me father."

"Michael Graaf," said Reding, severely, "the tale you seek to impose upon me, I know to be so utterly false in many parts, that I am compelled to doubt the sincerity of your feelings in all you express, in spite of your tears and protestations."

"If ever man betrayed the inmost secrets of his heart, I have now done so," was the reply, "imprudently, I admit, but you spoke as if there was a possibility that Clarice's child still existed, and all caution forsook me ; if you know more than you have told me, visit not my sins so heavily upon me, as longer to con-

conceal a fact on which my peace of mind for the poor remnant of my days, must inevitably depend. You cannot deny that I have a right to know every thing concerning the fate of my own child."

"It had been well, if you had remembered sooner Herr Graaf," returned his guest, "that a man has duties as well as rights in this world. If you had, you would not now have been inquiring the destiny of your own offspring from the lips of a stranger. You would not in the same breath have blasted the fair fame of the only being who ever truly loved you; the innocent confiding creature, who when her parents were in the grave, and the brother who was her sole protector, was far away in foreign service, chose you in defiance of her friend's wise counsel to be the partner of her future life—to be her husband, Michael Graaf. Nay deny it not," he exclaimed suddenly raising his voice when he saw the Treasurer about to interrupt him, "do not plunge your soul yet deeper into sin!

look there ! and henceforth, if you dare, deny that Clarice Reding was your lawful wife !”

With greedy eyes did the Treasurer glance over the contents of the much worn paper, that his guest now held forth for his perusal, and well remembering the contents of that Father Paul had so recently shown him, he trembled from head to foot as he did so.

“ It is the certificate of our marriage,” he murmured almost unconsciously, ere he had perused more than half its contents.

“ And written too by the very Priest who knit that bond between you, which no man can break asunder,” said Reding, and woe to him who has neglected the duties he swore in the face of heaven to perform, when an innocent and confiding being, was committed by holy church itself, to his guidance and protection. I can neither pardon, nor respect you Michael, whilst I hold this evidence of your falsehood, and your baseness in my hands, and I tell you plainly, that your only chance of averting my

just indignation, is by at once restoring my poor sister to the honest fame of which you have so heartlessly robbed her. Answer me plainly, do you acknowledge the truth of this document?"

"On certain conditions!" rejoined the Treasurer to whom this address had left time to decide on the plan most expedient for him to pursue.

"Name them," retorted Reding sternly.

Hesitating and apparently doubtful in what words to frame his request, the humbled Graaf began. "Your sister, Herr Reding, was not known in Lucerne; none here ever heard of my connexion with her in any shape; I am generally believed to be a bachelor, and unless her child lives, it can be of no use to excite needless curiosity and observations by spreading abroad the secret of my marriage. It might do me much injury, and can profit no one. I therefore request you, as a soldier and a man of honour, to whom I have never wilfully done

the smallest wrong, not to publish this story to the world.'

"You would have been better entitled to request this indulgence from me," returned Reding, "had you not striven as long as you thought deceit in your power, to deny your marriage."

"I have much to plead in my excuse," said the wily Treasurer with restored composure, for he plainly saw that the nefarious transaction of which Father Paul had accused him, was entirely unknown to his guest, and this conviction at once decided him what plan of defence to pursue. "My union with Clarice was short, her desertion of me for another man equally dishonourable to her, and to myself, and as a man of honour, you, Herr Reding, may understand and appreciate my anxiety to deny, nay even to forget the tie which made me a participator in her disgrace. Remember however anxious you may be to clear a sister's reputation, that she had first broken her marriage vow, before I was tempted to deny it."

"Have you evidence of this?" demanded the Officer sternly.

"Those from whom you have learnt so much, could doubtless have told you, that I fled broken hearted from Milan, when she with the shameless effrontery of ungovernable passion, deserted her husband and her home, to seek the protection of the wealthy and fascinating Signore Vergani."

Reding looked long and anxiously at Graaf, as if endeavouring to read in his countenance how much he ought to credit of this statement, but it was a countenance so habituated to conceal its master's emotions, under the smile of servility, or the leaden immutability of assumed stupidity, that he was no wiser for the scrutiny.

"In my anxious enquiries for my sister," he said at length, "I certainly did hear the name of Vergani coupled mysteriously with yours, but though these reports were more to your discredit, Herr Graff, than to hers, I confess

they were too vague, and ill attested to be received as evidence against any man, after the lapse of twenty years."

"The characters of the wisest and the best might be destroyed like flax by the flame, if exposed to such an ordeal," said Michael gravely, "and I hold it far from just—far from the usual candour of a soldier, that you should presume on such slight grounds to address such language to me, as you have this day done. You must be now convinced that I only am the injured person; that my hopes have been withered, my life blasted, by my unfortunate connexion with a weak and misguided woman. By no second marriage have I ever sought to repair the void she left in my heart. Vainly have I endeavoured to discover, if either she or her offspring survived, yet you spoke when we first met, as if you had been more successful in your inquiries, if you know anything of the child, after what has passed, I am sure you will no longer evade my questions,

but tell me all you have discovered concerning a matter, in which you may believe me, when I say, that my whole happiness is involved."

"If you have built hopes upon my words, I fear you are again destined to be disappointed," said the officer, "for I have told you nearly all I know. In one most material point our information differs; I was informed that Clarice had been deserted, and not faithless to her husband. It remains to be proved, which story is most worthy of credit. Her ultimate fate seems involved in profound mystery. Some said that she died soon after you parted, but one old monk who had been her confessor before you conferred that office on Louis Brentano, assured me, that as he was returning late one evening to the city, he met her passing one of the gates in company with a man who bore an infant in his arms."

"Ha! did he not tell his name?"

"He was so engaged in observing Clarice whom he described as faded and deplorably

altered, that he took no further heed of her companion, whose face he said was muffled in his cloak. I suspected it was yourself Michael Graaf, and it was this suspicion which brought me hither."

"You are mistaken," returned the Treasurer with trembling lips, "I swear by all things sacred, I have never beheld her, since she left my house in Milan!"

"It is a strange business," said Reding.

"Strange indeed," muttered Graaf, secretly wishing that his guest had been laid by a bullet under the Spanish turf, ere he returned to entangle yet further, the already complicated web of his fortunes. Nevertheless, he added, after a pause—"I heard about a year after I left Milan, that speedily deserted by her seducer, she died there of a broken heart."

"Then, Herr Graaf," rejoined the officer, "as you have acknowledged both your marriage to my sister, and your belief of her death,

I presume you are ready to account to me for the portion, which in default of her having children, was, after her decease, to revert to the surviving members of her family. I am the last."

Michael Graaf bit his lips, and turned more than usually pale, but he showed no other symptoms of displeasure, and coolly replied that of course he was ready to do every thing that justice dictated, but that until he had received full proof of his wife's decease, and was convinced that no child survived her, he considered he was not called upon to pay the sum in question.

"You are right," replied Reding calmly, "and as I have now returned to reside in my native land, and am at liberty to employ my time as I please, I shall leave no means untried to discover the whole truth of this extraordinary business. Good day, Herr Graaf, I trust for your sake, I may find nothing to throw discredit on your statements."

"You will not fail to inform me if you discover any traces of the child!" cried the Treasurer eagerly.

"Certainly not, and should you have anything to communicate, remember that Aloys Reding is always to be heard of at Schwytz."

So saying the Officer arose, and taking his hat from the table, with a cold and haughty bow departed.

The Treasurer with fawning civility conducted him to the door, but he saw plainly that he had gained no place in this man's confidence, or esteem, and greatly agitated by the conflicting feelings his visit had excited, he was no sooner left alone, than casting aside all disguise, he again seated himself, and leaning his elbows on the table, and his head on his hands, reviewed with something almost amounting to horror, this additional link in the chain, that was every day coiling closer and closer around him. He knew Aloys Reding to be a brave, determined soldier—one upon whose move-

ments he had no power to throw the slightest check, and when he remembered all the tissue of lies he had imposed upon him, and the near neighbourhood of Father Paul, to whom the truth was so well known, his heart sunk within him. He felt that if by his evil destiny these men should be thrown into each other's company, from that moment all the ingeniously erected fabric of his reputation would be utterly annihilated. Their intimacy he suspected not.

But though driven almost to madness by the dread of public exposure, that seemed like a thunder cloud perpetually hovering above his head, feelings of a more tender nature were likewise awakened in his heart by the past interview, towards the wife he had once loved, and the child whose loss he had never ceased to deplore. Remorse too distilled her drops of gall into his heart, and when the image of the fair young Clarice, whose life he had so cruelly blasted, arose before him, his softened heart

revolted from the idea of offering up Justine as a second victim to his avarice and ambition.

But like the genial showers of spring, these thoughts passed quickly, and his habitual train of selfish reasoning resumed entire possession of his mind. Still he shrunk from meeting his niece sooner than required, and he rejoiced to learn, when old Babette served up his late dinner that, hearing he was engaged, Justine had made a hasty repast, and retired to her own chamber.

CHAPTER IX.

Had crimes less weighty on the Spirit prest'd,
This troubled conscience might have sunk to rest :
And, like a foolish guard, been brib'd to peace,
By a false promise, that offence should cease ;
Past faults had seem'd familiar to the view,
Confus'd if many, and obscure though true ;
And conscience troubled with the dull account,
Had dropp'd her tale, and slumber'd o'er th' amount :
But struck by daring guilt alert she rose,
Disturb'd, alarm'd, and could no more repose.

CRABBE.

It was in vain that Michael Graaf, when Staffer came that evening by appointment to supper, endeavoured to persuade him to show some indulgence to the feelings of Justine. Irritated by her unqualified rejection of him that morning, he was more than ever determined to accomplish his purpose, like a hunter animated by the chase, who as his prey flies further and

further beyond his reach, becomes every moment more eager in the difficult pursuit.

"Our agreement is made, Herr Graaf," he said, "and if your part is not fulfilled, neither shall mine. If you cannot persuade her to receive me as her accepted lover, this very night, I must act accordingly."

Michael saw by the inflamed countenance and flashing eyes of his angry guest, that from this decision there was no appeal, and with the threats of Father Paul ringing in his ears, he turned his steps towards his niece's chamber.

It was already dark, and the Treasurer took a candle from Dame Babette as he passed the kitchen. He knocked more than once at Justine's door, and his surprise was great at receiving no answer, and yet greater when on pushing it open, he found the chamber empty. He called once, or twice on Justine, but without receiving any answer.

Though astonished by her absence from

home at so unusual an hour, the old man felt greatly relieved, and setting his candle on the table he seated himself with no other purpose than to prolong for a few moments his absence from Staffer, whose threats he shrunk from encountering, and overpowered by his feelings, tears were actually trickling from his eyes, when the door softly unclosed, and Justine stood before him.

“ Good heaven, my uncle !” exclaimed the girl starting back, and clasping her hands with unconcealed dismay, “ who could have looked for you here, at such an hour.”

“ And who expected you to be abroad, alone, at such an hour,” returned Graaf with a severe countenance ; “ I did not believe my niece would have been guilty of such imprudence. But mark me, Justine, this must have an end ; I ask you no questions, but it is plainly to be seen by your flushed cheeks, and swollen eyes, that you have been to meet your lover—that you have been under the shadow of darkness to

tell your grievances to Walther Stanz. For shame, Justine, for shame; I gave you credit for more discretion."

The poor girl, overpowered by the abruptness of this address, sank back in her chair and wept bitterly.

"You are too old for this folly," said the Treasurer arising, and walking towards her. "Walther Stanz is no husband for you Justine, and though, whilst children, Dame Muller may have imprudently allowed you to be too much together, whilst you are under this roof, I will not permit you to have these love meetings, either by night, or by day. It is full time you were married, and in spite of the promise of my inheritance, there is not a respectable man in the Canton will look at you, if you persevere in such courses."

"I have no wish to marry—if they would only leave me in peace, I ask nothing more of them," returned the girl weeping more violently than before.

“Not marry! a likely story indeed. Will you pretend to deny that there is love between you, and this low born cowherd?” cried the Treasurer sharply; “will you deny that for this reason, and no other, you have behaved with such disdain to an honest, and a wealthy, and an honorable man like Staffer? will you deny, that you have been out this very night to meet him in secret, and that you are resolved in your heart to be his wife, and his alone?”

“To every one of these charges I plead guilty,” replied Justine at length mastering her agitation, “and if you knew Walther as well as I do, I am sure that far from being his enemy, you would be the first to approve of my choice.”

“Folly! folly! all folly! every girl talks in this way, when some handsome young fellow has bewildered her brains; but I am too old for such trash! I value nothing but realities; substantial advantages, are to be won by wedlock, and if you are so silly and inexperienced

as not to estimate them duly, it is my duty to secure them for you."

"Oh uncle, what can you mean?"

"I mean that when a handsome young fellow, without a sixpence, grows old, and ugly, and illnatured, you have nothing but disappointment and trouble for your bargain, but if you marry a man with a well filled purse, and flourishing acres to boot, you will have the benefit of them for the rest of your life, let him be as odious or spiteful as he pleases."

"Indeed, uncle, I want no man's money," said Justine steadily; "whilst I live with you I have more than I need, and should I marry Walther, we are both young, and strong, and can earn an honest livelihood without encroaching on your kindness any longer."

"Very fine, very fine indeed," cried Michael in great and uncommon anger, "so this is to be the end of all my care, and my toil, and my savings! my niece is to marry a beggar, and work for her bread, when she may command the first alli-

ance in the Canton! Child, you put me out of all patience! you drive me mad! do you suppose that the Treasurer of Lucerne, a burgher of the city, and the richest man within its walls, would submit to bestow his niece, his heiress, his adopted daughter on the contemptible son of a beggarly bondman? I gave you credit for more sense, but it seems you have neither pride, nor reason. I would as soon see you the wife of the town Headsman."

"Walther's birth is humble I cannot deny," returned the girl arising from her chair with a calm dignity that well became her, "but that he is contemptible, I defy any man to prove. Though poor, Father Paul has bestowed on him an education far superior to that of the proudest landholder of the district, and had I the wealth of the haughtiest lady in Berne, I should think it well bestowed on such a man."

"And you would submit to purchase his favour with your gold?" said Graaf sarcastically. "Ah, Justine, you have yet to learn that

a woman casts not only her money, but her happiness away, when she descends to such an ignominious bargain. A man of honest pride is not to be thus bought."

"There is no danger of my making the attempt," replied the girl with haughty composure. "I am as poor as Walther, and have no doubt of his love."

"And if you are mad enough to think of marrying him," said the Treasurer yet more highly irritated than before, "it behoves your relatives, who are older and wiser than yourself, to make an end of such folly. Herr Staffer, the largest landholder within twenty leagues, is bowing to the very ground for your favour, and yet I hear nothing but Walther ! Walther ! Walther ! it drives me mad, and I tell you once for all, I would sooner see you drowning at the brink of a cataract, than the wife of such a slave."

"And I would sooner be dashed down the falls of Schaffhausen, than be the wife of Staf-

fer," cried Justine with a spirit her uncle had never seen her exert before.

"Yet the wife of Staffer you shall, and must be, before this week is out," he returned with dogged firmness; "girls, I tell you, are no judges in these matters, and I have come hither for no other purpose, than to tell you that Staffer is waiting below to make his addresses to you, in all due form."

"Then tell him I despise the meanness of his spirit," said Justine disdainfully. "Thrice have I rejected him, and this very morning, when he again tormented me, I spoke my horror of his suit, so plainly, that he must be the most contemptible of human beings, to seek by your authority to win my hand, when he knows full well, that hate is all the dowry it will bring."

"If that suffices him, it is no concern of mine," returned Graaf, "you must answer him yourself, Justine, and for my sake, I trust you will do so, in a very different manner. He

waits below, and I beg you will go to him without further delay."

"Never! so help me Heaven! I never will exchange another word with him," exclaimed the girl, with a wild energy that added a thousand charms to her lovely person.

"You must!" said the old man in a tremulous voice, for his heart shrunk from the task he had imposed on himself, "talk as you please, you have no more power than a bird in a snare, and whether with, or without your consent, you must become the wife of Staffer, before the week is out."

"Uncle, my dear uncle! do I hear aright, or are my senses wandering?" demanded Justine taking a hand of the Treasurer between hers, and gazing anxiously on his troubled countenance, "you have ever been kind, and good to me, and cannot mean what you say."

"Yes Justine, I have truly been hitherto as a father to you," returned Graaf, "and the time is now come, when you can prove your

gratitude. Staffer, enraged by your conduct, casts all the blame of your disdain on me, and vows the bitterest enmity. You know not how deeply that man can injure me—I have now no time to explain, but I tell you candidly, I am in his power, and you, you only can avert my ruin.”

“ Oh uncle,” returned the maiden, “ this is beyond my belief ! you tell me this tale, because you think I am a weak and foolish girl, and may thus be wrought to do your pleasure, but I know your wisdom too well to be thus beguiled. A stupid clown like, Staffer, is not the man to hold the fate of the cautious Treasurer of Lucerne in his hands.”

“ Yet, by the Saints, I only speak the truth,” returned Graaf.

“ Then Heaven assist you, for I cannot !” rejoined the maiden, with earnest solemnity.

“ Most thankless and ungrateful girl, I have little deserved this from you,” said the old man with bitterness.

“ You belie me greatly if you think I lack

gratitude," she replied, "I would do all that honesty permits to prove the deep sense I have of your favours, but to break all the vows I have pledged to Walther, and swear allegiance at the altar to the man I hate, and ever shall do, I hold rank sin, with which I would not stain my soul, though life might be the forfeit."

"Ha! is it thus, proud girl?" muttered Graaf gazing with amazement on the lofty and indignant bearing of the maiden, whom he had hitherto only beheld smiling in timid submission to his will, "then but one way now remains. The disobedient must be tamed to duty, and if my supplications are thus scorned, force must compel what kindness vainly sought."

"Force!" exclaimed Justine.

"Ay, force," returned Graaf in an unsteady voice. "I have no choice, Staffer will have revenge, if you thus set him at defiance, and desert me at my utmost need. You know not the multiplied ills your obstinacy will expose

me to, and yet I loved you tenderly Justine ! as my own child I loved you ! but it is folly for the old to hope that youth will ever prize, much less return, its deep affection !”

“ You weep uncle !” cried the girl sinking at the old man’s feet, as he turned away to conceal the tears that filled his eyes, “ I ever thought my happiness was as precious to you, as if I had been your own daughter ; I have never before disobeyed you, and I implore you, not to let that bad man harden your heart against me. Oh uncle, doubtless in your youth, you knew what it was to love, as I love Walther ! then I beseech you to look back upon those fresh, young years, and judge me now, as you then wished to be judged.”

“ Many a storm has blighted me since then,” murmured the Treasurer.

“ Time withers all things precious,” said the girl, “ so that man should surely forbear to outstrip its evil influence. Often have you called me daughter, but now I feel that it was but a

name, for had you been indeed my parent, I know full well you would sooner have died than have made my hopes—my happiness—my life your stepping-stone to prosperity. Yet even now I know you cannot do it—you cannot look upon the creature you have cherished from her cradle, who has clung round your knees, and lisped your name before her tongue could fashion other sounds—you cannot see her kneeling for mercy at your feet, and yet condemn her for some base, selfish purpose, to endless misery.”

“ I do but seek your happiness !” returned Graaf, in broken accents, whilst his hand trembled in the slender fingers of his petitioner.

“ Then you mistake it greatly !” cried Justine with breathless eagerness ; “ with a woman’s love, her happiness is knit—without it all is desolate, and if a woman’s pleadings ever yet had power to move your soul, or if perchance you have had cause to repent that you denied her prayers, make me not Staffer’s

victim. Uncle, you tremble—it is Justine—your child—your daughter that implores your mercy !”

“ My child ! come to my heart,” cried the old man, in accents broken by sobs, as he raised the weeping girl and pressed her in his arms, “ I cannot be the author of your ruin, whatever may betide me. Be calm—be calm. It is a mighty sacrifice I make—more vast than you can dream of ; and I was resolute, very resolute, but you have touched on chords that thrill to my very soul. Yes, I was once obdurate ! but that voice has often haunted me since then --it seemed to speak in yours ! but of that no more ! your suit is won ; you henceforth are secure, and I the only victim. Forget what has passed—love me, Justine—love me as heretofore ; I have much need of your affection ; you little know how much.”

“ I do love you, uncle ! have you not supplied the place of a father to me ?” exclaimed Justine, kissing his hand, again and again,

“and may blessings reward you for the pity you have shown to me this night.”

“Weakness, mere weakness,” muttered Graaf; “but I have said it. Staffer shall no more torment you; but remember it is on one condition—that from this hour, I never hear again of Walther Stanz.”

So saying, the Treasurer removed the arm his niece had flung around his neck, and with an expression of great perplexity and vexation on his countenance, hurried from the room.

Justine was left in darkness by his departure, but in the wild hurry of her spirits she knew it not, and for long she stood with clasped hands in the middle of the little chamber, revolving in her mind all that had passed, and weeping at intervals with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow, till the happy conviction that she was at length freed from the persecution of Staffer, mastered every other feeling. She drew a chair to the window, and seating herself in the moonbeams, she watched for long with

visionary tranquillity, the mists floating like giants around the summits of the Righi, for Walther's home was there.

Little did she know of the complicated passions that in the meantime distracted her uncle's troubled breast, as with unwilling steps he proceeded to announce to his associate his sudden change of purpose.

He repented of it, almost as soon as he had left the presence of his niece; and the angry upbraidings of the disappointed suitor, made him completely ashamed of his weakness. But it could not be recalled, neither could he explain to Staffer the shadowy train of feelings, which from remorse had melted into pity, and still made him resolute to endure all the evil consequences which might result from his offending the impetuous farmer, rather than involve Justine, the only creature he loved, in the misery he had brought upon his own head.

Yet, when Staffer departed in violent wrath,

convinced that all hopes from his assistance were at an end, his heart sunk within him, and he remembered with horror, how rapidly the hour appointed by Styger for the payment of the ten thousand florins, was approaching, and how utterly impossible it would then be, for him to satisfy his demands. The dangers that threatened him were shadowy and shapeless, yet therefore the more awful, and he felt with a sort of superstitious horror, that the weakness which had that night ruined him, had sprung like the other difficulties by which he was beset, from his former crimes.

But, though, for a brief space, his resolution failed, and his brain seemed absolutely paralyzed by fear, yet when he remembered the blessings Justine had heaped upon him, a tender contentment stole over his heart, and his agitation and his terrors were gradually subdued, by the rare consciousness of having chosen the better part.

Cheered by this gleam of heavenly light, his

active mind began forthwith to devise new expedients for his safety. He knew that the Republican Armies of the French Directory had already sought to impose a new constitution on several of the Swiss Cantons, and that after much hard fighting they had taken possession of Berne, and subverted all its ancient institutions. He knew that the agents of these subtle invaders, who made liberty their pretext for plunder, had found their way to Lucerne, for he had himself held intercourse with them. But the terms they had offered him for his assistance, were not he considered equivalent to the losses he must necessarily incur from any political disturbance, and he had therefore given them no encouragement to interfere in the affairs of the Democratic Cantons. He had, on the contrary, endeavoured to dissuade them from any attempt of the kind, and warned them that the extreme attachment of the inhabitants to their ancient laws and customs, would in all probability,

excite them to the most desperate and obstinate resistance, should any attempt be made to encroach on either.

In consequence of such advice, he believed the French Generals had delayed, if not entirely laid aside, the execution of their designs against the freedom of the mountain districts, and this was now remembered by Michael Graaf with bitter regret. He was convinced, that during the confusion attendant on invasion, and the high excitement of public feeling, he might have set the accusations of Father Paul at defiance ; but here, too, his keen and selfish pursuit of expediency, and his eagerness to secure his immediate advantages, brought ultimate ruin on his head, for though to escape from his embarrassments, he would willingly have involved all Switzerland in civil war, he was now painfully aware that it was already too late to derive any assistance in his present emergency, from such intrigues. His letters to Berne could hardly be answered, ere his in-

fluence over his fellow citizens, and his consequent credit with the enemy, would be entirely destroyed by the disclosures of Father Paul. If his reputation could be maintained, it was evident it must be by some other device. Only one expedient in this hour of terror and humiliation, occurred to his mind; and though it offered a certain and immediate means of obtaining the money of which he stood so much in need, without betraying to any man the secret of his necessity, even the seared conscience of the Treasurer, at first shrunk from employing it.

It was mean, base, and dishonourable; but that he heeded little, had he not known that immediate disgrace and ruin would attend its discovery; but as the following day wore away, without any new hope presenting itself, his mind became gradually more accustomed to the idea, from which he had at first recoiled, and ere twilight had deepened into night, he had made a specious compromise with Satan

and persuaded himself, after a long struggle, that he had devised a line of action, whereby the crime he meditated might, whilst it procured him all the advantages he desired, be greatly divested of its sinfulness.

Interest is a very subtle reasoner, and once listened to, rarely fails to win the victory over principle ; but in Michael's breast, it had only to struggle against a very feeble sense of right, most easily to be perverted ; and it was perhaps the novelty of the deed he meditated, as much as its dishonesty, which had made him regard it with a sort of superstitious awe.

Long after the stars had appeared in the clear vault of heaven, he continued to pace his chamber, with agitated and hurried steps ; but he made no preparations for retiring to rest. He had no candle ; his mind found sufficient occupation in its own thoughts, and in anxiously watching the progress of the lagging hours.

Again and again he looked from his window

into the streets, from whence gradually every light disappeared but that of the moon. The air was halcyon—not a breeze was astir; and many inhabitants of the city continued to stroll about to a late hour, enjoying the fresh and beautiful tranquillity of night.

The clocks struck the midnight hour, and again the Treasurer looked forth—long and anxiously—till one after another every living creature had vanished, and the quaint old city lay before him as still as a great sepulchre, he only, like a spirit of evil, keeping watch within its walls.

His heart beat quick and full—a cold dew gathered on his brow; he felt that the time for action was come; for a minute his resolution failed him, and passing his hand before his eyes, as if to exclude the image of the crime he meditated, he sunk back on a chair. But hardly had he done so ere the remembrance of Father Paul and his threats at once restored his energy, and starting up, he strode across

the room, opened the door of a small cabinet, and groped on its shelf with trembling fingers, till he grasped a key. The cold touch of the iron seemed to freeze the very pulses of his heart, yet he seized it, and thrusting it into his bosom, hurried with noiseless steps from the chamber and the house, into the silent city.

No sooner did he emerge from his own threshold, and find himself in the broad clear light of the moon, than he paused and looked around with anxious trepidation, to ascertain that his movements were unwatched. Not a living creature was to be seen; nor did the slightest noise disturb the serene tranquillity of the night. All was at peace, save in that bad man's bosom, and with renewed confidence he continued his way.

He forgot that neither silence, nor darkness, can veil the secrets of the bosom from the Eternal and All-Seeing Judge, and satisfied to

elude all human observation, he thought not of divine justice.

But even in this shallow calculation he was mistaken; an eye was upon him, which few things ever escaped, and a man, of whom no suspicion had ever flashed across his mind, held watch over every movement of the guilty Treasurer.

CHAPTER X.

How blest the Solitary's lot,
Who, all-forgetting, all-forgot,
 Within this humble cell,
The cavern wild with tangling roots,
Sits o'er his newly gather'd fruits,
Beside his crystal well !
Or haply to his evening thought,
 By unfrequented stream,
The ways of men are distant brought—
A faint collected dream :

While praising and raising,
 His thoughts to Heav'n on high,
As wandering, meandering,
 He views the solemn sky.

BURNS.

On the north eastern side of the Righi is a deep ravine, or rather cleft in the mountain, descending from its summit to the valley of Goldau ; countless waterfalls glance like falling

diamonds amidst the dark woods which clothe its sides, and the wild stream of the Aa, nearly hidden within its bosom by projecting rocks, and tall majestic pine-trees, goes tumbling and foaming, in one perpetual cataract, down to the little Lake of Lowertz.

Tremendous cliffs rise like a rampart abruptly to the right of the stream; not a level spot is there to be found, for the erection of even a shepherd's chalet, and though in summer the peasant's drive their flocks to the flowery pastures on the summit of the rocks, it is by circuitous roads round the more accessible parts of the mountain. Only one path existed in those days amidst that solemn wilderness, and now the destroying hand of time, which perpetually changes the aspect of nature in such wild regions, has not only obliterated every trace of human footsteps, but has mingled even the rocks they once traversed, with the dust of the valley.

Steep and difficult was this rarely trodden

way; sometimes it ascended from fragment to fragment of the ruined mountain, piled like a giant staircase by the capricious hand of nature, at others it wound up the dry and rugged bed of a torrent, or along a narrow ledge at its brink, when under spring's warm sun the melted snows rushed headlong to the valley. For a short space it skirted the upper edge of the dark pine forests, and then abruptly forsaking them, led along a narrow projection of the rock, up the very face of the precipice to an immeasurable height above the valley. Scarcely a weed or blade of grass grew on this arid path, till near the summit of the mountain it reached a small platform where a few stunted fern and dwarf rhododendron found root in the scanty soil, and blossomed in the dew of a waterfall, that far above rushed over the verge of the precipice, and long before it reached the dark abyss to which it hurried, was scattered like mist upon the air.

The path led beneath the archway of the

falling stream, to a cavern only a few paces beyond, and there all further progress was cut off, by perpendicular and inaccessible rocks. The shrill cry of the eagle, the crashing of a pine tree far beneath, or the echo of the distant shepherd's horn, were the only sounds, save the sighing of the winds and the gushing of the waterfall audible, during many months of the year, in that high solitude, but when the snows had melted, and the blossoms and the pastures revived, the footsteps and the voice of man were daily there, for the Cavern of the Waterfall was the dwelling of Father Paul. No man knew whence he came, and conjecture failed to discover his reasons for soliciting such an abode, till as years passed away, and the simple inhabitants of the mountains, became accustomed to his presence, curiosity was lost in awe and veneration for the pious and benevolent Hermit.

All knew that his fare was of the simplest and coarsest kind, yet his wisdom all acknow-

edged, and many who had derived benefit from his charity, his counsel or his skill in medicine, mingled his name with their prayers. But still it was a wild district, where superstition was ever ready to cast her meshes over men's minds, and there were some of the peasantry who asserted that his life was less lonely than was commonly believed. It was whispered that lights had been seen afar off, flitting along the face of the rock near his cave—that voices had been heard there at midnight by one adventurous shepherd who sought to explore the mystery—and that a female form had passed him on the rocks, and was gathered in the shroud of the mists.

Walther Stanz and his mother could, if they had chosen it, have given a reasonable explanation of these marvellous tales, but by Father Paul's commands they held their peace, and the common belief that the old man dwelt on the mountain to hold converse with its

spirits, from thenceforth prevented further intrusion on his privacy.

As far as most men knew, he was left to unbroken solitude, and in truth it frequently happened that for days together he never saw a human being.

On the third day after his interview with Michael Graaf, even Walther Stanz had failed to visit him, and lost in uninterrupted thought, he sat for many hours on a large fragment of rock in front of his cavern.

The scene beneath him was clothed in all the bright verdure of a southern spring, but he saw it not; his mind had wandered back to the days of his youth, and the withering disappointment that had driven him to forsake the dwellings of man. Cities were before his eyes, with all their busy throngs, and the voice of Clarice seemed to mingle with the gushing of the waterfall, and call him to avenge her wrongs.

Such imaginations were habitual to him, and though they were at times displaced by profound thoughts and vast designs for the benefit of his fellow creatures, and he was even then deeply engaged in secret schemes for the maintenance of his country's welfare, these visions were his highest pleasure upon earth, and long cherished by solitude, it greatly pained him, when they were interrupted for any length of time by human converse. Year after year he had patiently endured his deep seclusion, cheered by the consciousness that he was hourly fulfilling the wishes of the fair and innocent being, whom in life and death he had chosen as the eternal object of his love.

Released from all the bonds of social existence, his unshackled actions, might by many have been deemed to bear the character of insanity; yet, though the result of one concentrated and intense passion, they were ever under the guidance of his clear and powerful

reason. He did nothing hastily; nothing without a full conviction that it tended to the accomplishment of the object he had in view, and even his interview with the Treasurer had been resolved on for years. It had fully answered his expectations, and he was still calmly calculating its consequences, when the sun went down behind the crest of the mountain, and darkness threw her shadowy mantle over the pine-clothed valley at his feet.

He saw the moon arise in all her glory above the craggy peaks of the Mythen, and the waters of the cataract like liquid silver reflected back its rays. With longing and fearful eyes did he gaze upon the falling stream, till to his sight the sparkling drops assumed a form, and a fair shadowy creature came gliding from the glittering spray towards him.

Nightly had the Solitary been visited by this apparition for years, and undismayed he beheld its approach. He knew that the gentle spirit

of Clarice would have harmed no living creature when she dwelt upon earth, and he did not fear it now.

“Clarice !” said the Hermit in a low voice of tenderness and awe, “have I done your pleasure ?”

The spirit smiled sadly, waved her thin transparent hand, with a sign of approbation, and then flitted like a mist away.

“Gone ! gone !” murmured Father Paul, “don’t thou come bright creature, only for one minute to cheer my lonely heart ; but the time will be ere long, when I shall go to thee, and shadows shall no more part us.”

No language can describe the serene tranquillity that came over that troubled man when this persuasion took possession of his soul. The delusion was reality to him, and hiding his face in his hands he knelt down in long and earnest prayer, both for those he loved and for himself.

It was near midnight when he flung himself

on his bed of leaves, and sunk at once into a profound repose.

How long he slept he knew not ; the habit of watchfulness had rendered his ear peculiarly acute, and the sound of footsteps on the path leading to his cavern first startled him from this blissful lapse of dreams. A moment's attention convinced him that it was not an accustomed visitor, who approached his cell, and springing instantly on his feet, he felt instinctively for the dagger he at all times kept concealed in his bosom. He then hurried anxiously to gain the open moonlight, but ere he could cross the floor of his cave, the figure of a man darkened its entrance.

It was short and stout, but closely enveloped in a large mantle.

Father Paul did not recognise it, and loudly demanding who came there, he was greatly surprised to receive an answer in the voice of the Treasurer.

“ Michael Graaf,” he exclaimed, “ what

brings you here at such an hour? Is not even this secluded nook to be exempt from your intrusion?"

"I have come," returned the Treasurer humbly "to pay you the half of your demand."

"What!" exclaimed the Hermit with increasing amazement, "four days before the time Michael! this is incredible."

"But not less true," replied the Burgher, "and in this sack," he added drawing a heavy bag from beneath his cloak, you will find five thousand florins. Count it if you please, for I have no time to tarry, and I must have your receipt for it, before I depart."

"Truly you have chosen a strange time and place for the payment," said Father Paul, "and in one so fond of gold, as men say you are, I can ill account for this uncalled for readiness to part with it."

"You threatened to come and seek it, at my house," answered Graaf, "and if you must have a reason, can you doubt how unwelcome

would be such a visitor. To be candid Father Paul, I like not that any man should know of our intercourse, and have come therefore, under the shadow of night, to settle this matter without danger of interruption. Do you understand me?"

"Partly," said the Hermit doubtfully, for he still suspected there was a weightier motive for Michael's conduct, than that he had chosen to confess; "but I can scarcely imagine how you found the way to my abode."

"All on the mountain know the dwelling of the Hermit," he returned, "and Justine my niece once led me, when she was a child, more than half way hither. The moon shone bright, and I provided myself moreover with a dark lantern. If you have any more questions to ask, I pray you be quick, for I must have your receipt and begone, that I may get home before sunrise."

"You must tarry, at all events, till I have lit my candle, as it seems your lantern has

burnt out," replied the Solitary, "though darkness may perchance best suit many of your deeds, I can neither write nor count coin without a light."

So saying he turned his back on Michael, and retreated into his cave, where, familiar by long habit with every nook and cranny of its wild architecture, he speedily found his flint and steel, and lighted one of the rush candles, with which the mother of Walther Stanz kept him constantly supplied.

With anxious trepidation the Treasurer glanced around him, when its feeble ray made visible the scene. The low arched roof—the walls, and floor, were alike of the living rock. A bed of leaves was dimly visible in one corner, a large antique deal box, on which lay several much worn books, was in another; near it stood a crucifix and a small vessel of holy water was suspended against the wall; a rude table occupied the middle of the cave, and two

logs of pine tree with the bark still on, served the purpose, of seats. All was clean and dry but to a man of the Treasurer's self indulgent habits, most comfortless.

Father Paul having placed his candle in a cloven stick upon the table, commanded him to be seated, and taking his place opposite to him, watched with a smile the contemptuous expression of his wandering and inquisitive eye.

"Yes, Michael Graaf," he said, "it is doubtless a poor place, compared to the luxurious dwelling your guilt has earned for you, but it is the abode of peace, such as the wicked know not—such as they will never know—here or hereafter."

"Search thine own heart, proud man," returned the Treasurer, "there are thorns enough there, but leave others to live as it pleases them, and settle their accounts in the next world, the best way they can. I came to have

an earthly reckoning with thee, and not to talk of Hell, or Heaven. A man knows not which may be his own lot, and has no right to pronounce on the fate of his neighbour."

"You have chosen your course, I well know," rejoined the Hermit gravely, "and far be it from me to seek to turn you out of the path of destruction. If you have really brought me gold, produce it, and let me count it without delay, for I covet not your company."

"It is here," said Graaf laying his heavy bag on the table, "but surely we need not reckon over the whole, for it is in various coins, and would employ us till morning."

"That matters nothing to me," answered Father Paul, "no one will interrupt us here, and I am wiser than to take untold gold from your hands Michael, were it but to the value of a ducat."

"I am ready to give you my oath, the sum is all correct," returned the citizen.

"Caitiff have you brought me lead, that you thus prevaricate!" exclaimed the solitary with a glance that made Michael begin without further parley, to untie the string that fastened the bag.

But whether from agitation, or an unwillingness to part with its contents, or for some deeper cause, his hands shook so violently, that he appeared incapable of performing the task. He fumbled for several minutes at the tangled knot, rather tightening than relaxing it, till Father Paul lost all patience, and impetuously snatching the bag from his hold, pulled a knife from his girdle, and in an instant cut the cord.

"You are now convinced that I have not failed in my word," said the Treasurer as the money rolled out in heaps upon the table, "I promised you gold, and I have brought it."

"Ay gold, in truth," muttered the Solitary glancing with an inquisitive and mistrustful look, from the coin before him, to the face of

the man he addressed ; and so strange, so wild, so guilty was its troubled expression, that he was instantly convinced there was more in what was passing, than he thoroughly comprehended, and remained with his searching eyes rivetted on the face of Michael, till the Treasurer, no longer able to bear the scrutiny, rested his head on his hand, so as completely to conceal his features.

“ Why do you stare so earnestly at me—are you not satisfied ?” he said, as he did so.

“ This is strange coin,” returned the Hermit, “ to come from one who puts every Batz he gains, out to immediate usury. If you had hoarded from your youth, you could scarcely have collected such a motley treasure. There is some mystery here, that must be solved, before I take such suspicious property into my possession. I must know whence all this comes, lest I am unwittingly involved in the dangerous consequences of some of your evil doings. Whence had you this money ? By the

saints, Michael, your pallid cheek might make any man suspect you had purloined the gold."

"There is no contenting you," said Graaf, vainly endeavouring to conceal the agitation which his looks, his voice, his restless movements all betrayed; but if you will have it so, piece by piece I will give you the genealogy of every coin the bag contains."

"Caitiff!" exclaimed Father Paul, suddenly starting up and seizing him by the collar, "rather confess that thou hast stolen it."

"My confessions are for my priest, and not for thee!" cried Graaf shaking him off, and aroused by the sense of his danger to an unusual display of spirit, he continued, "there is half the sum I promised, in discharge of the debt you claim, whence it comes is no concern of yours."

"We are alone Michael," said the Hermit sternly, "but neither in the city or the mountain will I tamely submit to insult."

The countenance of the Treasurer changed in an instant.

"I have already offered," he submissively replied, "to tell you the history of every coin, and I am still willing to do so. Surely that might satisfy any man, who is not too mad to listen to reason."

"To the task then!" returned Father Paul sternly, turning to the table! "here are Italian ducats of the last century, where got you those?"

"From an Alpine smuggler who gave them in exchange for Flemish lace he purchased for the Cardinals."

"And here are Louis from the mint of France."

"They were a soldier's hoard, who lent them to me on large interest."

"Ha, can I credit that!" cried the Hermit as he continued to turn over the precious pile. "Here is Burgundian coin, Roman, Austrian, and even Spanish! but a truce to this mum-mery. I will spare you further lies, Michael,

so count the cash, that I may give thee thy receipt and be quit of thee ! But stay ! write on that slip of paper, that you have only paid the half ! I cannot be too cautious in my dealings with thee !”

With silent rapidity the Treasurer performed his task ; the money was correct to a single stiver, and when this was ascertained, Father Paul wrote him the required receipt, and handing it to him without uttering a syllable, received in return his memorandum of having paid five thousand florins to the Hermit, and being still indebted to him an equal sum.

Graaf having carefully secured the receipt in his well worn pocket-book, arose to depart.

“ Four days hence I shall expect the remainder of the sum,” said Father Paul, sternly.

“ On the fourth night it shall be yours,” was the reply, “ and remember I pray you, that silence is one condition of our bargain.”

“ Silence the most profound, unless you

fail to fulfil your contract," said the Hermit, with a peculiar expression, far from satisfactory to the Treasurer; "I have pledged my word, and to no man has it ever been broken. Begone!"

Vainly Michael Graaf endeavoured to utter the word farewell—it stuck in his throat; but he needed no second order to depart, and with hurried steps he quitted the cave, and commenced his descent to the valley. But the moon had set, and darkness redoubled the dangers of the way.

Long unaccustomed to tread those mountain paths, it was very slowly and with extreme difficulty that he proceeded, and when the light of morning arose, he had accomplished scarcely more than half the way.

He had left a horse at Kusnacht intending to return by land to Lucerne, and regain his own home, before his absence was discovered, but that part of his scheme was now frus-

trated, and weary and dispirited it was nearly noon when he rode into the town, oppressed by many presentiments of evil he vainly struggled to subdue.

Father Paul was no sooner left alone in his cavern, than after taking about half a dozen gold pieces from the money he had received from Graaf, he carefully concealed the remainder in a secret hole in the rock. He then extinguished his light, and sat down to meditate on the past, and the consequences that were likely to result from it. Strange to say, the young forms of Walther Stanz, and Justine Reding, were the first that arose to his view. "Poor blossoms," he thought, "they are floating on the brink of a whirlpool, though they know it not; but their destiny is in my hands, and whatever may betide to others, they at least shall be blest."

He then arose, and conscious that sleep was absolutely necessary to prepare him for the

labours he had determined to perform on the morrow, he again lay down on his humble bed, and strove to forget all the intricate web of the intrigue, in which his love for the unfortunate Clarice had entangled him.

CHAPTER XI.

The vapour from the brow
Of the old mountain crests, begins to part
Like care from off the forehead, and the heart—
And all is cloudless now !

The landscape's free expanse,
And all the harmonies that spread around,
Combine the joys of hearing, sight and sound,
Are gathered at a glance ;
And powerfully they tell,
With deeper eloquence than notes divine,
Of many things that round our heart-strings twine,
And in our fancies dwell.

ANDERSON'S LANDSCAPE LYRICS.

WHEN the Hermit awoke on the morning following the visit of Michael Graaf, the sun was shining brightly into his cavern, and there in the clear warm beams sat Walther Stanz, watching at the foot of his pallet. His hat was cast aside, and his long hair fell in rich curls upon his shoulders, as he bent forward supporting his head on his hand, and Father

Paul felt as he gazed upon the young man's beautiful countenance, as if one of the visions of his sleep had been prolonged. Yet he was grieved to see the deep and hopeless dejection written there.

"You have come Walther to tell me bad tidings of your suit to Justine, have you not?" he said, making the youth start and colour by this unexpected address.

"Have you dreamt of my errand, Holy Father," he returned, "that you know it so well."

"I know only what your own countenance has told me," said the Solitary, "but I shall be glad to hear more, and learn if my aid can profit you."

"I fear it is beyond even your power to avert my misfortunes," answered the youth sadly.

"What, is Justine already married to Staffer," exclaimed Father Paul.

"No, heaven forbid!"

“What then?”

“Her uncle detains her at Lucerne. She is exposed to hourly persecutions, and even threats of force are used to bend her to their purpose.”

“How know you this?” demanded the Hermit.

“My mother, when I could not leave the Hospital yesterday, went to visit her brother, Hans the tailor, who is a gossip of Dame Babette the Treasurer’s housekeeper.”

“And does the girl give way?” eagerly inquired the Solitary.

“On the contrary! she has openly declared our love, and rejected Staffer with scorn.”

“Then by the Saints, if she has proved herself thus worthy of you,” cried the old man, “neither the power of Michael Graaf, nor Staffer, no! nor of twenty such as they, shall rob you of your bride!”

“Ah, Father Paul, you have given me vain hopes before now!” returned Walther sadly.

"What merits have I to put in competition with wealthy and honourable suitors?"

"Your love is your claim!" exclaimed the Hermit, impatiently interrupting him, "and it is one might serve a humbler man than you, Walther, to bear down all opposition. It is a heavenly guide—a mighty conqueror—obey its dictates, my son, and leave all else to me! Can you go to Lucerne to day?"

"There is not a chance of my getting away from the Hospital till near midnight," was the youth's reply, "and I am well nigh distracted, when I think what may happen to Justine ere then! I never knew the value of liberty till now."

"If matters stand thus," returned Father Paul, "I will myself go down to Lucerne, and see the girl if it be possible; she must not be left to think that you neglect her. At what hour, may I tell her you will come to meet her, if she can get abroad?"

“It will be impossible for me to leave the mountain till long after sunset,” replied Walther; but oh, Father Paul, if you will indeed go in search of Justine, and tell her to meet me for five minutes, under the old church walls, my gratitude will know no bounds.”

“All you ask shall be done,” said the Hermit, “but calm yourself—fulfil the tasks of the day with diligence, and fail not to be true to your appointment.”

“If I could lay down my life for you, Father Paul,” said the young mountaineer, with solemn earnestness, “it would be little in comparison to all the benefits you have conferred on a poor shepherd’s son, who had no claim to your kindness but his helpless poverty.”

Your affection and gratitude have more than requited me, for the little I have done for you, my son,” returned the holy man, whilst tears filled his eyes; “and poverty and wealth make no distinction in my eyes, between man and man.

The humble are more precious than the proud, in the sight of the Lord, and from the smallest seed, a rich harvest may arise of joy, or sorrow. All things here are undergoing a perpetual change, and though the ways of providence appear marvellous to us, from whom the links of its secret chains are hidden, they are ever working out the punishment of the wicked, and the ultimate triumph of the meek and pure of heart. You may yet live to see in one instance, this just retribution, and in the meantime remember my words and let them sustain both your virtue and your courage, should trials thicken around you."

"My powers of endurance have already been largely tried," said Walther.

"Ay, by petty ills—that I grant you! like the stings of the musquito, when frequent they are perhaps more irritating than acute misfortune, but the great struggles that fashion a man's mind for eternity are yet to come! they are not far distant nevertheless! and from vir-

tue and religion only will you derive strength to triumph over the stormy vicissitudes of life, and the yet fiercer assaults of the tempestuous passions of your own soul ! Remember my son, that evil comes not always from without ! its germ is in ourselves. It is man—man only, who sows the seed of sorrow, in this beautiful world, and though the guilty may gather the golden grain for awhile in the sunshine, they will reap full surely ere their day is done, the bitter harvest of their own misdeeds.”

“ I cannot prove my strength till it is tried,” returned the youth, “ and my heart pants to participate in the active struggles of life.”

“ Ay, Walther ; you are like the rest of mankind, who ever blind to the import of the present, see only the future, and the past,” said the Solitary. “ When the torrent down which you are hurrying, has borne you to the tranquil waters of age, you will look back with amazement, to the whirlpools and the rapids you are passing now.”

"The agitations of my own breast I am fully conscious of," said the mountaineer in a troubled voice, "but what I crave is action; the power to carve my way to honour, if not fortune—to wipe the stain of slavery from my brow, and prove myself deserving Justine's love."

"We do not live in tranquil times, and even this wild wish, may ere long be granted you, my son," replied Father Paul; "the army of the French Directory, forty thousand strong is in possession of Berne; they have emancipated the subject districts of every Canton, and in spite of promises and negotiations, there is little doubt they will speedily attempt to force their new made constitution, on the Democratic Cantons. Many districts are already in arms, and the contest cannot long be delayed."

"And I, poor slave, whilst others are drawing their swords in defence of their country," said Walther, "have been drudging over the petty disbursements and receipts of the Hos-

pital! Have you recently heard this news Father Paul, or wilfully kept me in ignorance?"

"I have long foreseen that war was approaching to our own hearths," returned the Hermit; "I have long known the Schwitzers, and men of Lucerne, will have to give battle on their own hills, to their hypocritical and insolent invaders: but I wished not to distract you from better thoughts and held my peace, though when the moment for action arrives, I would be the first to put a rifle into your hands, and bid you shed the last drop of your blood in defending the banner of your Canton."

"Would that the day were come!" exclaimed Walther pacing the cavern with hurried strides.

"Would it were past!" said the Hermit solemnly. "In the meantime you must pursue your occupation at the Hospital with diligence, for many of the letters you daily write, in obedience to your holy employers, though you understand not their mysterious language,

are of deep import. Aloys Reding the new Landshauptman, whom you have seen in my company, is well practised in war and awake to the signs of the times. He and others have foreseen that money, ammunition, corn and cattle will be needed, and in secret, and in silence, are making preparations against the coming storm. The Monks at the Hospital are unsuspected agents of the patriots, and many of the pilgrims you have lately seen there, were the bearers of important intelligence. We have reason to believe that Michael Graaf is well acquainted with the intended movements of the French !”

“ Ha ! will he side with the Patriots ?” demanded Walther eagerly.

“ That remains to be proved. I have never yet known him other than a scoundrel, and a coward, and there is little doubt that his conduct will be decided by expediency. But he cannot move a finger without my knowledge.”

“ Every word you utter, more and more

amazes me," said Walther, who had watched the flashing eyes of the Hermit, with astonishment during this speech.

"I doubt it not," returned Father Paul. "You have hitherto only known me as the visionary anchorite, but my passions were once fiercer than yours—my youth was spent in arms, and though my spirit has been long humbled by misfortune and penance, yet still unchanged as the echoes of my native mountains, it responds to the unforgotten cry of Tell, and liberty."

"Ah, Father Paul, talk to me no more of patience," cried the impetuous youth—"you too have felt as I do—have wished that days—that months—that years, were shortened, till you won the object that your panting soul desired."

"Yet my son, whilst on earth, nor I, nor any other man hath yet attained it. The craving desires of the spirit, no success can appease; these are but to guide it to Heaven, where only its longings for perfection can be

fulfilled. It is our nature to toil for wages we despise when won; but whether we value, or scorn the objects of our desires when possessed, it is our duty to take heed that they are such as will ennoble, and not corrupt our minds by their pursuit."

"Will it be long till our shepherd's horns breath the music of war?" demanded Walther, who engaged by wild and hurried thoughts heard little of the wise counsel of the Hermit.

"News is hourly expected from Berne," returned Father Paul, "Aloys Reding receives speedy intelligence of all that passes there, and I have a trusty adherent in Lucerne, whose observation nothing escapes. But now take that pen Walther, and write a few lines to Justine, which I will engage she shall receive before sunset."

The young man made no reply, but after rapidly obeying this command, handed his brief note to Father Paul with silent respect.

"And now my son," added the Hermit, "I

must speak to you of another matter. It is a time when all brave men should be provided with arms. I fear your father's rifle may be too old for use, but take these six Louis, and purchase one the first time you visit Lucerne by daylight," and he gave his delighted companion the money he took from Michael's bag. "I hear the bell at the Hospital ringing for matins, so now begone," he added, "I shall not return here to-day. But be sure you fail not to keep your promise to meet Justine under the old church wall. Hope all things and farewell."

"With such a friend I were a coward to despair," said Walther turning to depart, and after profoundly and reverently saluting the Hermit, he left the cavern.

Down the path he bounded with a step like a mountain roe, his heart beating wildly with hope and undefined anticipations of future activity and joy; nothing seemed too great for him to undertake—nothing too vast for him to

accomplish ; he believed he had only to act to be successful—to will, was to perform the noblest deeds, and he already exulted in triumphs he felt no doubt of attaining. The wisdom of Father Paul, like that of all other instructors, had failed to teach him how inadequate are the talents bestowed upon man, to realise the boundless aspirations and perfect visions of his soul.

The solitary did not long tarry in his cave after the departure of his young visitor. No sooner had he offered up his customary prayers, and taken his simple morning meal, than he secured the rough door of this lonely dwelling, and directed his steps towards the valley.

Before he had descended more than half way thither, he suddenly turned aside into a wilder path amongst the pine woods, and once more began to ascend.

He left the woods beneath him, he gained the upper pastures, where though the snow still lay in patches, the fresh herbs were spring-

ing fragrantly, far and wide, in the bright sunbeams. Not a sound was to be heard, save the lark warbling high above his head.

“He is free, and glad, and sinless,” thought the anchorite, “would that my soul could thus mount beyond the shadows of earth, and gaze on nought but Heaven! but man is linked to man by passions and affections, and whilst on earth, one can have no exemption from the laws that rule the universal destiny of his race. We must love, and we must hate, we must toil, and we must grieve, however deeply in our hearts, we feel that all is vanity. Those surely are most blest, who from the cradle to the grave, sleep on in peaceful dullness, seeing nought beyond the narrow circle of material wants. Hope deceives them not—disappointment embitters them not; deception maddens them not! But no—I covet not such apathy; I would not give one moment of the fleeting rapture that rewards the ardent and sensitive soul, for all the countless ills, that cling unto

its nature, for centuries of such a base tranquillity !”

Occupied by these thoughts, Father Paul imperceptibly approached a shelf in the mountain, where under the shadow of a single pine tree, which appeared as if borne by the spirit of the winds to that high region, stood a wooden chalet. The door of the hovel was open, and in the broad sunshine before it, Lena the mother of Walther Stanz was busily engaged washing her milk pails and singing meanwhile at the top of her voice till nearly a dozen echoes answered to the notes.

LENA'S SONG.

THE SWEET WEST WIND.

Oh follow me not ! no foot can trace
The sweet West Wind to its dwelling place,
Hither and thither I fit through the sky,
Hither and thither like gossamer fly ;
Scarce brushing the spider's web away,
From the thorny bramble's waving spray ;

Weeds and grass,
Sigh as I pass ;
Yet onward I flutter with gay deligh
Wand'ring unseen by day and night
And never, oh never, will mortal fin
The cradle, or grave of the sweet W

Her second son Fritz sat on the
her, carving a wooden toy, but
smile was bright which played ove
some features, as Father Paul dre
uttered not a word, and it was evi
vacant eye, that he heard not a syl
following discourse between the E
his mother. He was deaf and dum
the most precious treasure that tl
Shepherdess possessed. She love
with devoted affecti-

pursued, as then, her daily toil, was all the society she ever craved.

"A Queen in her palace might envy you Lena," said the old man, smiling benignantlly when she hushed her voice, at his approach.

"You are a happy woman."

"Have I not cause," she said, "the snows have melted a month earlier than usual; the sunshine is bright and warm to welcome the young lambs; Walther, noble fellow, has won the heart of the best maiden in the Canton and Fritz has finished a whole pile of toys for the summer fair, and he and I, thank heaven, are as fresh and as strong as the breeze that is blowing around us. Look at him father, does he not grow a fine and comely youth?" demanded the mother, fondly, stroking down the flaxen locks of her son.

"Yes, in truth does he," said the anchorite, with compassionate sympathy, "he reminds me daily more and more of his father."

"Poor child! Yet he was not born for two

months after my husband was found dashed to pieces at the foot of your old rock, Father Paul! You remember the day: poor Fritz would have been as wise as Walther but for that."

"The ways of the Lord are his own," said the Hermit gravely: "but tell me—have you returned lately to send the poor boy to the town?"

"He brought the letters that Walther gave you two days ago," she replied. "but yesterday I went myself."

"Did you see your brother Hans?"

"His room was shut up, and his neighbours said he had gone to work at Alsdorf, but I thought otherwise, and and I met seen you, I intended to have sent down Fritz for any letters he might have brought for you."

"Is it safe to trust matters of such import to one so weak?" said Paul mistrustfully.

"Oh yes, far safer than if he were wiser," she returned, "for no one suspects him, and his wits are sharp enough. They might tear

him limb from limb, before he would deliver up anything either his uncle Hans, or I had committed to his care."

"There is no need to put his discretion to the test to-day, Lena," said the Solitary, "I want to see Hans, and am going to the town myself. Matters are drawing to a crisis over the whole country."

"Yes," replied the woman, "they say in Lucerne that though many Cantons have submitted to these detestable French, others are arming rapidly against them, and that Schwytz, and Uri, and Glaris, are marshalling their forces. They talk of giving us liberty and equality forsooth—but we want no such bloody gift from them. We have long loved the laws that rule us in happiness and peace; but the fields where our fathers fought and conquered are around us, and the brave hearts of our shepherds are even a surer guard, than the strong barriers of our mountains and our lakes."

"Treachery is an overmatch for them all,"

said the Hermit solemnly, "and it befits those to whom the people look up for guidance in these times of danger, to guard if possible against it."

"You ever think more of others than yourself, Father Paul," rejoined the peasant, "but this time let me be your messenger, for I well know you dislike to descend amongst the dwelling places of men."

"Ay, Lena," returned the old man, "for twenty years I held converse with few save yourself and Walther, but that boy clings every day closer and closer to my heart. There are those who seek to blast his peace, as mine was blasted; and it is time I should cast aside my selfish sloth, and rescue him ere the shafts of his enemy inflict a wound that mortal care can never heal again."

"What can any man do to injure my gallant boy, whilst we dwell here in peace?" inquired the Shepherdess, gazing with incredulous wonder on the Hermit.

“ Much, Lena ! much you dream not of,” he returned ; “ but I have sworn to be his protector, and heaven will prosper the oath. I would rather rush beneath a falling avalanche than live to see the blossoms of his youth destroyed. But I can rescue him, and I will—for though vice is strong, Lena—love is far stronger.”

“ The saints avert all evil from his head, for he is a dutiful child !” said the woman crossing herself, for though accustomed to the wild and bitter language of the Solitary, she ever listened with awe to his mysterious prophecies.

For a time there was a deep silence, and then Father Paul hastily inquired if Lena had brought back the garments he left with Hans. “ I wish to avoid observation,” he said, “ and cannot go to the town in this monkish frock.”

“ You will find them in the old box under the cheese shelf,” she returned pointing to the chalet, and without further parley the Solitary entered the hovel in quest of them. When he

reappeared it was in the dress of a peasant, with a wallet on his back, and a staff in his hand, and those to whom his features were not familiar, would never have recognized in the stalwart shepherd the Hermit of the Waterfall.

He spoke little, but taking a hasty farewell of Lena and her son, he departed with rapid steps by the path leading to Weggis, and was no more seen that day upon the mountain.

He was no sooner out of sight than the industrious peasant resumed her labours, but not her song: for the words of the Solitary had sunk deep into her heart. She knew much concerning him that others dreamt not of, and her knowledge instead of diminishing, had ten times multiplied her awe and veneration for this remarkable man. His commands were to her a law, his predictions a prophecy, and the danger impending over Walther, to which his mysterious expressions alluded, filled her with alarm during the many hours that intervened till sunset.

Poor Fritz, who read her trouble on her saddened countenance, tried all the simple arts affection could dictate, to enliven her ; but she only shook her head, and sighed—and tears filled her eyes when she looked on the helpless youth, and thought how desolate and forlorn he would be, if she and Walther were taken away and he were left to the charity of strangers.

But he poor fellow knew nothing of death, and had no experience of want, nor of unkindness to make him dread the future. He grieved when he saw the blossoms decay, but he had seen them ever revive with the returning spring ; he wept when Walther first left him to pass the day with the good priests of the valley but night after night he had beheld him return, till his departure caused no terror. But that evening when he caught the first glimpse of him on the mountain path, he darted off with more than usual joy to meet him, for he trusted though his feeble efforts had failed to cheer their anxious mother, that his brother as he

ever did, would bring peace and gladness to their lonely dwelling.

Though words were denied him, early habit had established a language between these young men, equally comprehensible to both, and before they reached the spot where Lena sat with her distaff, Walther had been made fully acquainted with the whole occurrences of the day, and anxiously did the poor dumb youth watch the lips of his brother, as he related to the Shepherdess, the engagement he had made with Father Paul, to meet Justine that night at Lucerne.

"It is well my son," said Lena with deep solemnity, "and though I lay at the point of death, I would say, go! obey the command of that holy man, to the utmost of your power."

"And I, for once, would disobey you mother," returned the youth. "Never I trust, shall I for any selfish interest, desert you in the hour of danger."

"I need no proof of your love," rejoined the

shepherdess, "you have ever been a dutiful son; but hearken to me now, and let my words be a law to you. Obey Father Paul as you would the commands of a Saint. Leave me—forget me—but never presume to question his pleasure, for heaven has placed your destiny in his hands, and evils we dream not of, might fall on all our heads, were you to provoke his anger. His wrath would be awful to encounter!"

"Fear not mother for me," said her son, "nothing arouses his passions but injustice, or crime, and you of all people should least fear him, for no one has shared his confidence, as you have done."

"Perhaps not," she returned, "and it is that makes me aware of the necessity for your obeying him in all things. He does nothing without a purpose."

"I believe it!" rejoined Walther fervently, "and truly I could not disobey him, if I would; I know not of what men the world is composed,

but I know that neither priest, nor shepherd on this mountain, can compare to Father Paul ! he is like a king amongst them all, and if these French come to destroy the ancient bonds of our confederacy, and impose their newly invented laws upon us, there is no man so well fitted as Father Paul, to take the lead amongst our mountaineers, to direct the ferment of troubled spirits, and the desperate resistance that must and will ensue."

"You are right my son," said Lena, whilst tears filled her eyes as she gazed with admiration on the noble countenance of the enthusiastic youth ; "even in his dark cavern he directs many minds, and though the French may gain possession of Lucerne, let them make but one step amidst our mountains and they will discover to their cost, that our wise men are not unprepared for them, nor have our people forgotten the triumphs of Sempach and Morgarten. But the Holy Mother avert all bloodshed," she added, suddenly changing her tone, and

devoutly crossing herself, "let not the tempest affright us, whilst the cloud is yet distant. Go into the hut my son ; your evening meal is ready, and when you have eaten, depart without delay, for the twilight will scarcely serve to take you half way to Lucerne, and if you are to return to the mountain after midnight, you had better snatch what sleep you can before it, at your uncle's."

"Is it likely I shall find him at home?" inquired the youth.

"I have no doubt of it ; so make all speed and begone," was his mother's laconic reply, and in less than ten minutes, Walther having taken an affectionate farewell of her and Fritz, went bounding down the mountain, with the joyful anticipation of speedily meeting his beloved Justine. Lena stood on the brink of the rocks, watching his descending figure till the glare of the setting sun rendered all objects invisible to her, and then turning away she sat down on the turf, and hid her face and wept.

A change, she scarcely knew wherefore, had in a few hours come over her spirit. Poor Fritz crept close to her side, and strove to appease a sorrow such as he had never before seen ; but this only redoubled her distress, by reminding her of his utter helplessness, for she felt a bewildering dread that Walther had left them for ever—that he from whom he could alone claim protection when she was laid low, would return no more to gladden her lowly dwelling, and cheer her heart by his love !

But religion, the frequent occupation of her long and solitary hours, at length returned to lift her soul above the shadows of care, and as the moon rose round and full above the hills, she took her speechless companion by the hand, and led him to the little wooden image of the Virgin, enshrined near the door of her dwelling. There they both knelt, and there amidst her fervent prayers, the remembrance of all presiding mercy, and the many blessings vouchsafed to her, stole like a reviving dew

over her heart. She felt that the faithful are never forsaken by the Lord, and that divine justice had prepared for her child beyond the grave, the perfection denied to him on earth.

Yet still many anxious thoughts for Walther kept sleep far from her pallet, and it was near dawn, before she sunk into a troubled and brief slumber.

CHAPTER XII.

"Lord mend us! the world is nothing but a continual warfare of opposite machinations and deceit: for my own part I can do no more."

DON QUIXOTE

HANS BRUNK, the brother of Lena, having been rickety and feeble in his youth had no taste either for mountains or mists, and as his parents could not afford to keep him in idleness he wisely took to the needle instead of the crook, and sought preferment in the honourable profession of a tailor. Sitting half his life crossed-legged upon a board by no means

tended to the development of his stature, but whilst his limbs remained stunted, his head swelled prodigiously, and his wit grew in proportion.

Speedily emancipating himself from the trammels of a master, he contrived nevertheless to secure for himself all that master's best customers, and though he kept a room for himself in Lucerne, he spent the greater part of the year, either in hill or valley, travelling from cottage to cottage over the four Cantons, with his thimble and shears, and needles, to furnish the young men with wedding garments, or to repair for the old, the dilapidated wardrobes which like themselves were well stricken in years.

Hans, who was a very cunning fellow, was universally welcome. To great skill in converting a ragged garment into a seemingly habili-ment, he united the rare accomplishment of playing the fiddle — and whilst the young people danced to his music, he kept the old

ones in good humour, by his jokes and his flattery. He was moreover a very chronicle of news, and took sincere interest in every thing that did not interfere with his own advantage.

But whilst every body liked him, he liked himself better than all the rest of the world put together. His sister Lena and her children stood next in his estimation. But he never gave them any thing but his affection, though it was well known that he had saved money. He was too stingy even when a young man to think of encumbering himself with a wife, and he had lived so long at other people's expense, that he thought that nobody had any claim upon him.

Yet still he had a great affection for his nephews, Walther especially, and the only serious disagreement he ever had with his sister, was when she refused to allow the boy to be bound to his honourable trade.

He was far too handsome, he said, to waste

his days amongst goats and sheep, but Lena was obstinate, and Father Paul, of whom the tailor had heard strange things, threw out some mysterious promise of aiding Walther's advancement in life, which finally put the question at rest.

But the Hermit, deeply read in human nature, at that time saw sufficient of the little tailor to convince him he was a man of whom, in case of necessity, he might make a useful tool, and he had since had frequent occasion to know the value of his discernment.

Hans, whilst exceedingly keen-sighted, was not less self-conceited. Michael Graaf, to whom he was well known, had unwittingly wounded his vanity more than once, and though in trifling matters, the provocation had been sufficient to excite the lasting hatred of the tailor.

Moreover his penetration did not fail to discover, under the specious exterior of the wily Treasurer, the real vices of his character.

Though little Hans was selfish, he was not a bad man; he would have scorned to take an unfair advantage, or do an unprovoked injury to any one, and his dislike of the cunning Michael was therefore confirmed past all change, by his thorough conviction of his utter want of principle and integrity. For years, wherever he could secretly thwart him, he had invariably done so; he felt convinced he said, that he should one day catch him tripping, and with this conviction he kept the strictest watch upon his movements.

The Treasurer would have been not a little astonished and dismayed, had he known how, between his keen faculties of observation, and his powers of combining his discoveries, the little tailor was aware of his most secret transactions. Hans was greatly in Babette's confidence, and so much did he contrive to glean from the unwary housekeeper, that his frequent absence from Lucerne made no gap for him in Michael's history. But a great change had

recently taken place in the little man's mode of life; he remained more at home; but though he said he was tired of a wandering life, and had sufficient employment in the town, at intervals he suddenly disappeared, and whilst he pretended it was in pursuit of his trade, his neighbours thought otherwise. Some said Michael Graaf had engaged him in certain smuggling transactions—others shrugged their shoulders, silently implying something ten times worse, and all agreed that the demeanour of the tailor became every day fifty times more consequential, and that very suspicious figures were to be seen gliding in and out of his door, at all hours of the night.

In fact, the Treasurer never suspecting that Hans bore him any ill-will, had selected him as a very fitting agent in his negotiations with the French Generals, shortly after they had declared their hostility to the ancient and established order of things in Switzerland.

From Lena, Father Paul soon learnt the

secret of the duke's immediate journey to the camp of the invaders, and to the chiefs of the disaffected party in France : and a small bribe procured for him the most exact information as to every movement of Michael Graaf, and the contents of his most confidential dispatches, for the duke's letter to him by Hans, was not in the least compromised by his being taken into his custody, but was rather increased by his having supposed him capable of being the willing agent of treason against his country.

To FREDERICK PAUL, therefore, a fervent patriot and enemy of the Treasurer, he joyfully reported the particulars of every intrigue he was employed in, and whilst the Treasurer believed him his own faithful agent, he was in reality the devoted partizan of the man he most dreaded and detested.

Hans did not fail to discover that Graaf had sent to Berne to withdraw his money from his banker's hands ; that this step had been taken too late, and that he had received

nothing but the intelligence of their failure, coupled with certain reports, that convinced him that if success continued to attend the progress of the invaders, his office of Treasurer of Lucerne was not likely to be of long continuance.

Hans was likewise frequently the bearer of important intelligence to Father Paul, and when the Hermit descended from the cottage of Lena to the city, his steps were immediately directed to the ancient mansion, in which was the tailor's solitary chamber.

A rickety wooden staircase led to the first story of the building from a damp uninhabited cellar beneath, where a winter's store of wood, broken boxes, and rubbish of every description, afforded roosting places for an innumerable tribe of chickens.

Hans, who was never idle, was perched upon a table under the window, when the Hermit entered the room, putting the last finish to a brown suit for his patron Michael Graaf, and

keeping a keen watch between every stitch, over the movements not only of his neighbours, but of the inhabitants of the whole city, who at intervals crossed the market-place, which his position overlooked.

He received Father Paul with as much respect as he could feel for any human being except himself, and that was not very great.

The fact was, his mind and his principles, were beyond his comprehension, and whilst others venerated the sacred character of the Hermit, he saw in him no more than an eccentric, shrewd old man, who paid him well for the tasks he employed him in.

He requested his visitor to be seated, but he did not descend from his own elevated position, nor interrupt his labour; but Father Paul, accustomed to his manner, paid no attention to it, and calmly inquired, what news he had heard in Berne when he was last there.

"The whole town is in an uproar," he returned, "the tailors are all out of work, and

unless matters are speedily settled, either one way or another, every member of the council will be in rags before midsummer."

"But what are the plans of the French? Do the people submit quietly to their dominion?"

"Sometimes they do, sometimes not; there was a skirmish the day I got there, and I saw the President of the Council's Secretary's Deputy's coat, which had been in the fray. It had three rents torn in the flaps of it with a bullet, and truly it was a grievous pity, for it was of Saxony broad cloth, worth thirty franks an ell, and not a tailor could be hired to mend it for love or money. They were too busy enjoying their equality, as the French call it—long may it last them!"

"Was there blood spilt?" enquired the Hermit, anxiously.

"Not enough to moisten the point of a needle," was the reply. "These Bernese are a paltry set, compared to us mountaineers; they

might have cut the French to pieces long ago if two of them had been of the same opinion ; but every man there thinks only of his own interest."

" But surely the ravages of the invaders in Fribourg and Soleure, and the increasing exorbitance of their demands, might have terrified them into unanimous resistance."

" Few take warning from their neighbour's folly," said Hans sharply ; " some were afraid of their lives—some of their property—some would rather see any enemy within their walls, than an aristocracy ; debtors, and sinners, and public defaulters, thought all their little peccadilloes would be cancelled by a revolution, and many said the constitution was like an old patched garment, that could only be repaired by a new one."

" And does Frisching, the leader of the patriots, as the partizans of France presume to call themselves, still continue in favour with the invaders ?"

"Yes, yes, he knows how to play his cards as well as his friend Michael Graaf. They are in close correspondence, and moreover," added Hans, with a peculiar wink of the eye, "he is the town Treasurer likewise!"

"What of that?" inquired the Hermit.

"Ah, Father Paul, don't ask me; you know the world as well as any man, and it is plain when the French get the keys of the public strong box, they will be ignorant of all deficiencies. Men don't sell their country for nothing, depend upon it!"

"Of Frisching's honesty, I know nothing," replied the Hermit, "but have you ever heard Michael Graaf suspected of peculation?"

"I don't pin my faith on my neighbour's sleeve," replied Hans with a significant nod; "a pigeon could sooner peck at pease and swallow them not, than a miser look at gold without fingering."

"And is that all your ground for suspicion," inquired Paul.

“When a dog goes often to the well, I judge it is not without drinking; when a magpie flies to and fro across my path, I never doubt that there is carrion near, and depend on it, an old bird like Michael would not leave his roost at midnight, if he had no plunder in view.”

“Ha, how know you he has been abroad at such an hour?” exclaimed Paul.

“La Sir! do you think there is anything passes in the city, that I do not know?” returned the conceited artificer of shreds and patches; “and to prove it, I will tell you, that either Herr Graaf is afflicted with the malady of sleep walking, or is engaged in some mysterious business, with which I am not intrusted, for three different nights, have I seen him leave his own dwelling at midnight, and steal along the Square under the broad shadow of the houses.”

“And he went always in the same direction?” inquired the Hermit.

“Quite the contrary,” returned Hans; “the

first night he went towards the city gates; the second he crossed the open square to a lofty building in front of us. You know which I mean, Father Paul," he added, with a significant grin, "and you know where that low strong door in the turret conducts! well—he turned a dark lantern before he unlocked it, and looked cautiously around; but not an eye was on him but mine. He entered—closed the door behind him, and returned in less than ten minutes. He wore his cloak, and I fancied his size was more bulky than usual, but neither you, nor I, could have kept pace with the speed, with which he regained his own dwelling."

"And the third time?" enquired his attentive listener.

"He went to the tower as before, but when he left it, instead of returning home, he passed up the street to the east, and I guess he left the city, for he did not return till near noon to-day."

"Hans," said Father Paul solemnly, "you

have given me strange tidings, and this man must be no longer permitted to go on in his iniquitous course. Were his business honest in yonder building, it would not need the veil of night to conceal it."

"That is certain," replied the tailor, "and moreover, I have reason to believe that in the course of yesterday, he sent letters to the French at Berne, by other hands than mine."

"Doubtless they were overtures of treason," returned the Hermit, "but with all his cunning, he has gone a step too far. Notice should be given to the city authorities of his proceedings."

"Don't expect them to help you," said Hans; "a poor man would be arrested on far less grounds of suspicion, but Michael is one of their own flock. A friar cannot preach against thieving, when he has a goose in his sleeve; he knows that well enough."

"But were he once arrested," cried Paul, "I have such proof against him, that though

his whole wealth were lavished in large bribes, he could not buy acquittal. I have not the smallest doubt that he has robbed the public treasury, and though at another time I might have had the weakness to conceal my suspicions, I should be guilty of a crime scarcely less than his own, were I to spare him now. No time must be lost, for doubtless the traitor is urging the advance of the French into this ill-fated city, that his crimes may be obliterated by the blood of his countrymen. Like a foul weed how rankly sin doth grow within the heart to poison the whole being with corruption, when in our youth the germ is not plucked out. He will return; perchance this very night, and if he does, he must be arrested in the act, whilst the vile hire of his iniquity is clinging to him, as a black evidence of his guilt."

"It would be a wise, and a good, and a profitable deed, no doubt," said the tailor, "but who is to do it, is beyond my comprehension."

"I will," said the Hermit solemnly, "for though so help me heaven, I would rather any other man should bring the traitor to justice, yet for no private feeling of my own, will I shrink from the performance of a manifest duty. Graaf is not a powerful man, and fear would rob him of the little strength he has; surely we two could master him."

"What you, Father Paul! you who have lived on bread and water, out of the memory of man!" cried his astonished companion; "why he would slip through your fingers like the beads of a rosary, before you murmur a Pater Noster, and as to me, it is many a long year, since I handled any weapon but a needle and shears."

"Yet together I doubt not we could detain him, till our cries brought some of the townsmen to our aid."

"I don't know that!" said Hans, "there are no houses near his line of march, and moreover in all cases of disturbance, the city

watch makes it a rule to be as deaf as a door nail."

"But surely in this very house, there are men who would be ready to assist in the arrest of a criminal?" returned Styger.

"There is not one of them, save myself, has the courage of a hen-sparrow!"

"There is old Carl Wendel, who was once a soldier."

"Aye, and he is as deaf as a stone," rejoined Hans.

"There is Whilhelm Adler."

"Who will roll to bed an hour after sunset as drunk as an owl. No—no—Father Paul, it is a desperate business, for I tell you, there is not a man in Lucerne, save myself, who, if he came at your call, would not take to his heels, the moment he heard your prisoner was Michael Graaf. He smiles very softly, but like the bears of Berne, every body knows he is best at a distance."

"But I am satisfied with your help, and you have set him at defiance," said Paul.

"I am the most humble of his servants," cried his host with a grin; "yet I confess, I would willingly teach him, that a tailor is not quite so contemptible an animal as he presumes to think, but can sting as well as crawl about at his bidding."

"Then you will consent to assist me in arresting the scoundrel?"

"With all my heart would I do it," returned Hans, interrupting his work for a moment; "but to speak truth, I have no experience in wrestling. The only time I ever tried a turn is nearly forty years ago, I then got such a confounded dressing, that at the very name of fighting, I feel a twinge in my back to this day. To serve a friend—and one who has always been liberal as you have, Father Paul, I would do much, but surely my nephew, Walther Stanz, would be of more use to you in this business than I can."

“Walther Stanz—not for the world!” cried the Hermit, abruptly, in a voice that made him look up in his face with surprise and curiosity.

The excessive agitation of the old man completely amazed him; but even his penetration could not divine its cause; and after a brief pause, he added, “the boy has a strong arm, and a stout heart, and he owes you such a debt of gratitude, and has so much need of my favour, that he durst not say, nay, if he would.”

“You know not what you talk of!” exclaimed Styger, sharply, “not for the full accomplishment of the punishment long merited by Michael Graaf, would I allow that youth to be mixed up with such intrigues. That pure young heart, as long as I can prevent it, shall not be drawn into the troubled vortex of sin and corruption. No, no, Hans, you must aid me to-night yourself, for Walther shall bear no

part in the affair. If we succeed, twenty Louis shall be your reward."

"But if we fail?" demanded the little man, whose face turned pale at the very idea of the enterprise.

"You can take to your heels, and I will bear all the blame."

"So be it," said Hans, devoutly crossing himself with a trembling hand, "in good sooth, a stout heart is better than a strong arm, and the reward is considerable; I have no fear of success, not I—you were bred a soldier, Father Paul, and two must be a match for a gouty old fellow like Michael Graaf."

"I have little doubt we shall master him," returned the Hermit, gravely, "and in the meantime, I must depute you to keep a sharp look out on all that passes. I have business in the town, but will return here in search of you, a little before midnight."

"I shall be ready," answered Hans, in a tremulous voice.

“Remember, if you betray a hint of our purpose to Walther Stanz, you lose your twenty Louis; Farewell!” — and with these words, the Hermit left the tailor’s dwelling.

CHAPTER XIII.

The sky is changed, and such a change. Oh, night
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,
Leaps the live thunder.

BYRON.

GREAT wonder had been excited in the household of Michael Graaf, by his absence that morning from his home, and many were the vain surmises of Dame Babette when he returned at noon exhausted by fatigue and want of rest. This was the more amazing as he piqued

himself peculiarly on the regularity of his habits ; but he was not a man to be questioned.

He made a hasty meal, and retired to his chamber, without making any enquiries after his niece, but no sooner was old Bobette left at liberty, than she hastened to inform Justine of her master's return.

The poor girl suspected he had been to arrange with Staffer some new plan for her persecution, but she said nothing, and with the anxious hope of either seeing, or hearing some news of Walther, from those who came across the lake, she had no sooner finished her solitary dinner, than taking her knitting in her hand, she strolled towards the Hof Brücke.

Father Paul, from the time he left Hans, had kept a strict watch over the Treasurer's dwelling ; and at length with infinite satisfaction beheld the graceful figure of Justine glide from the threshold. He saw that her face was pale and her eyes heavy with weeping, and remembering the promise he had given Walther, to

assure her of his truth, he forsook his hiding place, and followed her towards the bridge.

By contributing to the happiness of these young guileless creatures, the fresh, bright feelings of his own youth seemed restored, and he felt as if the shade of Clarice glided by his side, and blessed him for his kindness.

Justine was already seated in her favorite shady recess, before Father Paul reached the Hof Brucke, though her fingers were busy with her twinkling knitting needles, her mind was fully occupied with thoughts of Walther, and as she neither observed, nor recognised the Hermit in his disguise, he had full time, whilst leaning against an opposite buttress, to observe her with more attention than, in their previous transient interviews, he had ever before done. He was deeply interested in the scrutiny; for on her he knew the happiness of Walther Stanz entirely depended, and he was one who believed most fervently that the secrets of the soul are written on the countenance, as legibly

to those who understand them aright, as are the traces of time. The longer he gazed on the sweet face of the unconscious girl, the less he marvelled that his pupil had made her the idol of his love. He had never doubted she was fair, but now he felt she was endowed with attributes, so far surpassing beauty, that his heart was softened even to tears, and he whom the world believed to be in his lonely cave, cut off from human sympathy, felt with a thrilling and a glowing heart, that though his own course had been sad and dark, he would secure even at the hazard of his life, the happiness of that young, motherless creature, who, with the fervent confidence of a pure devoted heart, had forgotten all care for her own destiny, in her deep love for one, from whom fortune had withheld every other gift.

"If the saints are propitious, and the Virgin not deaf to my prayers," murmured the Solitary, "much that she dreams not of, shall be the reward of her generosity, ere I am laid in

the grave," and with this thought, and still gazing earnestly on Justine, he advanced towards her.

The movement roused her from her reverie, and when the Hermit saluted her, his well known voice made her start with amazement from her seat.

"Resume your work," he said kindly taking her by the hand, "none will remark us then, and I have much to say to you, for I come to speak of Walther Stanz."

"Is it possible, Holy Father, that you know,"—murmured the blushing girl, and then she paused in confusion, as if unable to finish the sentence she had so impetuously begun.

"I know all," hastily rejoined the Solitary, in a low, soft voice, "I know that Walther loves you, as his own soul, and that he is worthy of your love."

"Oh I doubt it not," was Justine's hasty exclamation.

"I know moreover," continued Father Paul,

"that he has a rival in your uncle's favour, and every moment he is absent from you, is embittered by fears lest you should be forced to become the wife of Staffer."

"Never ! tell him, never !" cried the maiden her eyes glittering with tears. "I have no doubt of his truth, though he neither comes, nor sends to comfort me in my sorrow ; why then should he have any mistrust of my constancy ! You come from the Righi, Holy Father, perchance you have seen him—perchance you know why he has not once been to Lucerne, since the morning he rowed me up the Lake ?"

"I have seen him," was the Hermit's reply, "and have come hither, at his request, to give you renewed assurance of his affection, and to tell you, that the commands of the monks at the Hospital have, since you parted, detained him much against his own will, every day in their service. He stole an hour from his rest, to visit my cavern this morning at dawn, when he charged me with the message I have given,

and with this slip of paper, containing perhaps more precious words."

So saying, Father Paul put Walther's note into the trembling hand of the maiden, and with infinite delicacy of feeling, turned away that she might peruse it unobserved.

With wild, yet timid joy, did Justine glance over the two kind short lines it contained. They merely requested her to meet him at midnight, under the old church walls. For a few minutes, her bosom throbbed with unmingled delight, at the idea of once more seeing her lover, till the remembrance of the lonely place, and solemn hour he had appointed, filled her young mind with confusion, and mantled her cheek with blushes.

She looked up to take counsel from the Hermit, but Father Paul had disappeared, and she was left alone to rely on her own judgment, or rather on her own feelings. Her first impulse had been to go at all hazard, and the first impulse, some assert, is always the best;

but certainly, where the heart is concerned, it usually triumphs over prudence and fear, and all the host of weaker opponents which arise to chide its dictates.

Justine felt it might be imprudent, it might be unsafe, it might be indecorous to leave her uncle's house alone at such an hour; but love had a thousand reasons to oppose to all this, and the remembrance of what Father Paul had said, concerning Walther's engagements, convinced her, that weeks might pass before she had an opportunity of meeting him by day. Moreover, she thought it would be cruel to disappoint him, when he had come so far, and he might misunderstand the motives of her absence, and believe it the effect of indifference. This was a thought she could not bear, and ere long she was thoroughly convinced, there could be nothing wrong in her meeting her playfellow, who had hitherto been the unfailing confidant of all her joys and sorrows.

Once arrived at this conviction, her feelings

were those of unmingled pleasure, and the afternoon glided rapidly away, whilst unconscious of the progress of time, she remained on the bridge apparently occupied with her work, but in reality, absorbed in pleasant fancies of all that Walther would that night say to her, and all she had to recount in return.

The chill damp rising from the Lake after sunset, first warned her to return home. Gladly would she have seen and spoken with Father Paul before she did so, but he appeared not again that day.

When she met her uncle at their evening meal, the manner of both was constrained and embarrassed. It was the first time they had seen each other, since the dismissal of Staffer, and the momentary tenderness of the Treasurer, being now entirely forgotten in his anger and vexation at the consequences of his niece's obstinacy, he never deigned to address her, and speedily returned to his own chamber, without even wishing her good night.

At another time, this would have given Justine serious uneasiness, but now she cared little either for his silence, or his ill humour; she was thinking only of Walther, and no sooner was she left alone, than she hurried to her favorite window, to watch for the moon as it arose beyond the Righi, and to count the chimes of the Cathedral, as they tolled the departing hours.

The light of the silver planet at length streamed above the mountain, but her disk just two days past the full, was only rarely visible through chasms amidst gigantic masses of stormy and troubled clouds, as fringed with her light, they towered in dark, huge, and fantastic masses, high over the canopy of heaven. Mists of changing and uncertain form, hung around the summits of the Righi, and broad sheets of lightning poured at intervals their uncertain and ghastly light over the scene, deepening the awful sublimity of earth and sky.

The eleventh hour rang from the Minster steeple; no other sound broke the silence of the city save its long echoes, and the repetition of the chimes from the feebler bells of more distant churches. Not a breath of air was astir and as the lightning grew more frequent and more vivid, awe amounting almost to terror chilled the heart of Justine.

She trembled to think that Walther was abroad in the troubled atmosphere that enveloped the mountains, and every glimpse the flashes gave of the fantastic clouds redoubled her apprehensions of his danger.

Mutely she stood at the casement, watching the progress of the tempest, till at one burst, the winds rushed with tremendous howling to the valley, and a clap of thunder, loud as if the heavens had crashed above her head, burst over the city, and aroused the countless echoes of the mountain, till the din was lost in one deep, endless murmur.

More excited than dismayed by this grand

struggle of the elements, the noble hearted girl, no longer hesitated about the part she had to perform ; but after commending herself to the care of the Virgin, whose image decorated her chamber, she determined to proceed without delay, to the spot fixed on by Walther for their meeting.

With this intention she had descended one flight of stairs with noiseless caution, when to her surprise and dismay, she heard sounds that convinced her that some one else was awake and astir in the house, as well as herself. A door, she was almost certain that of her uncle's chamber, was softly unclosed, and slow but heavy steps made the old staircase creak ; after a pause of silence, the rattling of bolts followed and then the house door was opened and shut as gently as its heavy latch permitted.

Her heart beat with increased rapidity ! she knew not what to think ! could it be some secret intruder who thus sought to escape unobserved from the house—could it be her

uncle who had gone abroad at such an hour? Then she remembered his absence the preceding morning; and her former suspicions that he was plotting evil against herself and Walther flashed upon her mind.

This, though a false, was a very natural idea to occur to an inexperienced girl, who could form no conception of the complicated intrigues of a man like Michael Graaf, or dream that what constituted the whole interest of her life, was to him only an insignificant thread in the troubled web of his far spreading designs.

Under this conviction, his first impulse was to speed back to the window of her own chamber, and endeavour to ascertain whether any watch was kept upon her movements. For a few minutes no object could be distinguished in the thick darkness, but in a broad flash of lightning, she ere long caught a momentary glimpse of a figure hurrying across the market-place, which from its bulk and gait, she felt certain must be her uncle.

She did not tarry another instant, but freed from all fear of detection, glided with the utmost rapidity through the house, and passed out at the front door into the open air. It was a night that might have appalled many a stouter heart than hers. As she looked up to the broad canopy of heaven, fountains of livid fire poured from its unfathomable depths, and the thunder with long reverberation rolled loudly above her head ; but of nature she had no fear ; bred upon the mountains, it had been from childhood her delight to watch her tempests in all their endless variety of sublimity and beauty. The moon, as if especially to guide her on her way, shone forth between the piles of stormy clouds, and with light step and bounding heart she hurried to her lover.

Once, or twice as she proceeded, she caught glimpses of the figure that left her uncle's house before her, but ere she reached the shadows of the old church walls, it had entirely vanished. Nor was it once remembered when

Walther Stanz with a glad cry of welcome rushed towards her, and clasped her fondly in his arms.

"Ah, Justine, how can I ever thank you?—how can I ever prove my gratitude for this kindness?" murmured the young man at length, "I feared we should never meet again."

"Indeed Walther," she replied, "though I have come because you asked it, my uncle has commanded me never more to mention your name—never more to think of you."

"And can you obey him?" demanded Walther.

"Not quite!" was the maiden's reply, "but indeed, indeed, I fear we shall see each other very seldom; I fear that all our pleasant walks are at an end, that I shall never go to your mother's chalet more, nor meet you at chapel to stroll over the pastures after Mass is done. No, Walther—no; all our happy days are past and gone."

"Why do you say that, dearest?" inquired

the young mountaineer; "if you will tell me that your heart is unchanged, that Staffer has no share of your love, I shall still be the happiest of human beings."

"Is it not enough that I am here, Walther," she murmured! "surely no words are wanting to prove that I am still, and ever shall be unchanged!"

"Then let us fear nothing!" cried Walther fervently.

"You know I am no coward!" returned the maiden half reproachfully, "I have been severely tried."

"If that Staffer has given you a moment's pain, he shall be made to repent it though I die for it!" cried the youth.

"No! no! be calm, I entreat you, or you will grieve me more than he has power to do. It is my uncle who has been my worst enemy, and yet he relented at last."

"Ah, Justine, were he not your uncle, I could tell you much—"

"Say nothing, I entreat you, say nothing!" exclaimed Justine, eagerly interposing, "he long treated me like a father, and he loves me, I do believe he loves me, in spite of this unkindness, for when he saw my distress, he took pity upon me, and promised he would persecute me no more."

"Staffer then came to the house?"

"Repeatedly! but I would not see him, and I hope he will no more return."

"You do not know the man if you think so," cried Walther impetuously; "he has been pampered from his birth by prosperity, and will not thus tamely submit to disappointment. Your uncle, to speak plainly, is a hypocrite, and I fear the evil is but deferred. It is frightful to think, Justine, that you must return to the power of men like these, who have no more regard for a woman's feelings and her happiness, than for a worm in their path."

"What can I do?" said the girl with a deep

sigh, and tears chased each other rapidly down her cheeks.

“There is one act would effectually release you from their power,” returned Walther in a tremulous voice, “and that, beggar as I am, I tremble to propose to you; yet, Justine, believe me—poor as I may be, if at the altar you would bestow on me the right to defend you, neither sorrow, nor insult, nor want, that I at peril of my life could defend you from, should afterwards afflict you.”

“Nay, Walther, this cannot, must not be;” murmured the girl, whose agitated voice betrayed her emotion, though the darkness concealed her blushes. “To set my uncle thus openly at defiance would only bring ruin on us both, and if he must have a victim, I will be the only one.”

“That you shall never be! but I implore you to think on what I have said,” returned her lover. “In truth Justine it nearly drives me mad to sit toiling, and plodding over musty

papers in the Hospital, when I feel that you perchance, in the meanwhile, may be snatched from me for ever. A thousand horrors come before my mind, I cannot banish—countless evils, and difficulties, that a few words uttered at the altar of that Chapel, would dissipate for ever. Such have been my dreams since we parted, and if they have been too bold, forgive me; but they will return in spite of me, and you will rob me of every source of consolation, if you refuse to let me hope, that ere long I may be so blest as to call you mine for ever.”

“I will promise you not to wed another,” said the maiden timidly.

“But may I not hope—”

“Hope what you please,” she rejoined with a smile, “I believe we can neither of us help it, and like that flash of lightning over the sky, it makes even our troubles wear a momentary brightness. Holy Mother, preserve us!” she exclaimed suddenly crossing herself, “what a peal of thunder! I felt as if the very ground

shook beneath my feet, and the rain is coming down in torrents! I must begone, Walther, indeed I must!"

"I cannot part with you so soon," he replied; "come under the church porch, you will there be sheltered from the storm, and surely you cannot deny me your company a few minutes longer, when it may be weeks, Justine, before we meet again."

The young man, as he uttered these words, gently drew his companion towards the sacred building near. But ere they reached it, another flash of fire, and a brattle of thunder like a bursting cannon above their heads, for a moment arrested their steps, and whilst they still stood awe struck by sounds surpassing all the previous fury of the tempest, voices, as of men calling wildly and repeatedly for assistance, broke through the dying murmur of the elements.

"It is my uncle! It is Father Paul," they exclaimed, almost simultaneously, and in ano-

ther instant, steps came rapidly towards them, a hand was laid on Walther's arm, and a voice which he recognized at once to be that of his uncle Hans, cried in accents convulsed by terror. "Whoever you are, if you would prevent murder—if you would arrest a villain, make all speed ; those cries will tell you whither."

"What can you mean, uncle?" cried Walther in amazement.

"Walther, here ! then the saint's are indeed propitious !" was the little man's reply ; "but ask no more questions and begone, or you will be too late."

"Then take this maiden under your care, farewell Justine, farewell !" cried Walther with distracted impetuosity, and scarcely conscious of what he did, in the agitation of the moment, he clasped his trembling companion in his arms and imprinted a kiss upon her lips, ere he rushed away into the darkness.

In the utmost terror she called on him again and again to return, whilst Hans prevented her

following him ; but every step as Walther hurried from her, he heard the mingled cries of Father Paul and Michael Graaf for assistance ; the voice of the former he had never yet disobeyed, and full of wonder and strange terrors, the entreaties of Justine had no power to detain him, and at his utmost speed, he ran on towards the spot whence the sounds of alarm proceeded.

CHAPTER XIV.

This approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens ! that this treason were not, or not I the detector !

SHAKESPEARE'S KING LEAR.

THE tempest had already deepened the darkness of night, ere Father Paul again sought the dwelling of Hans Brunk, to claim his assistance in the arrest of Michael Graaf. He found that notwithstanding the promised reward, the courage of the little man had greatly cooled during the hours he had passed in solitude, and it needed all the Hermit's deep knowledge

Of human nature, to induce him to take any share in the enterprize. Its proximity had greatly magnified its danger, and he secretly upbraided himself for his folly, in imparting his suspicions of the Treasurer to Father Paul.

At length however he did consent to accompany the Hermit, but it was evident little aid could be expected from him in the approaching struggle, and Father Paul much repented not having secured a more efficient auxiliary. But it was now too late, according to what Hans told him, the appearance of the Treasurer was to be expected about midnight and the moments seemed hours whilst he watched impatiently, for further proof of his guilt. But his anxiety would have been tenfold had he known the proximity of Walther Stanz, who under the old church wall was then eagerly expecting the coming of Justine.

The Hermit, who had never inquired the hour appointed for their meeting, concluding it was long past, had given it no further thought.

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His whole soul was engrossed by the meditated arrest of Michael Graaf, and as time stole on, he began at length to apprehend that he might have crossed the Square unseen, under cover of the stormy night, when in a ray of the fitful moon, he caught a glimpse of the dark outline of a figure hurrying towards the fatal tower.

Neither disguise, nor the dim light could deceive him. It was Michael! his mortal enemy! the man who had not only blasted all the hopes of his own life, but had been the destroyer of the only creature he had ever passionately loved. It was the selfish being, who unwarned by the lessons of the past, was still daily seeking to build his own prosperity on the ruins of other's happiness, who had unconsciously come forth to consummate his own ruin, and to draw down on his own head, the punishment that heaven had long, but not interminably delayed. As the thunder rolled and the lightning flashed, and the tempestuous

Winds came howling from the mountains, it seemed as if nature itself exulted in this fulfilment of moral justice.

"Hence! there is not a moment to be lost," cried the Hermit, when the Treasurer, in all the blind confidence of successful avarice, once more disappeared under the low portal of the little turret door.

"Shall we not take pistols, Holy Father?" inquired the tailor eagerly.

"No, no, we must do no murder," returned the Hermit; "we will leave the sword of justice to punish him—our only business is to arrest the robber. But away—away; there is not a moment to be lost."

Hans would at that instant freely have given more than half he possessed, if he could have devised some further pretext for delay, but even the prolific invention of cowardice failed him in this critical emergency, and when Father Paul again desired him to proceed, he

felt compelled to descend the creaking stairs, at a pace as rapid as that of his task-master.

He disliked going abroad into the storm at such an hour, as much as he did the prospect of attacking Michael Graaf, but his spirit was completely subdued by the strong mind of the Hermit, whom deep passion had invested with more than human energy, and when he reached the open air, not daring even to murmur an objection, he did his best to keep up with his rapid strides. Yet the whole way they hurried towards the tower he was revolving in his nimble mind the chances of escaping, when the moment of danger arrived, for his craven heart was fully convinced they had not the slightest chance of success, and if possible, he dreaded the revenge of Michael Graaf even more than the anger of the Solitary.

But he cunningly forbore all further expression of his fears, and with an appearance of the utmost zeal, pointed out to his employer

a dark angle under the shadow of a buttress, where they might unseen await the reappearance of the Treasurer.

How different were the thoughts of those two men, when apparently bent upon the same purpose, they stood in the breathless silence of expectation, under that old gray wall. Their detestation of Michael Graaf was the only feeling they had in common, but the mean hatred of the one, differed so widely from the noble indignation of the other, that it seemed scarcely possible that both were excited by the same object.

Could the secrets of Father Paul's exalted mind have been at that moment disclosed to his companion, they would have been as utterly incomprehensible to him, as the mysteries of Plato; and if, on the contrary, the Hermit could have divined the paltry calculations of his selfish companion, he would have smiled with contemptuous pity, and returned to his own lofty contemplations.

But thus it ever is, on the great theatre of life, where one point of affinity brings men together, who are in all other respects as opposite as darkness and light. Little minds, as well as the greatest, have their appointed places and uses, in the vast scale of spiritual being, and all are efficient tools in the hands of providence to work out its marvellous scheme of justice.

Something of all this passed in the mind of Father Paul, as the tempest flashed around, and during a few brief moments the whole of his past life, the feelings, the provocations of other years, that brought him there that night, recurred with the clearness of reality to his mind. Those bygone days seemed to him as another existence, when now, after the lapse of nearly a quarter of a century, old and withered, he was about to be the arbiter of that man's fearful destiny, who had clouded his solitary life with anguish and despair. The minster clock struck the midnight hour ; it was repeated again and again from other steeples, as if to

Make the silence that followed it more palpable.

Then did the Solitary for a time forget his errand, and recur to old delusions; his mind wandered back to his lonely cavern, and the shadowy image of the fountain, that for years, nightly came to visit him there. A deep sigh heaved his bosom, that made Hans turn with silent amazement towards him, but it was too dark for him to descry the agitation of the Hermit, or the fixed intensity of gaze, with which he regarded a long ray of moonlight, that fell between one of the turrets and the main building, directly at his feet.

Far less could he behold what Father Paul there saw, or dream what he then felt.

The wishes of the old man were, as by a miracle fulfilled. There, in that soft, silver ray, stood the spirit of the waterfall, half mist, half substance—her pale hands crossed upon her bosom, and her long hair falling on each side

of her sadly placid face, till it seemed to mingle with her floating garments.

The lips of Father Paul trembled, but speech was denied him—he sunk on one knee before this mistress of his soul, as if to ask her blessing on the deed he had come to perform.

For an instant she raised her eyes from the ground, and a smile like a beam of glory, lighted her æraphic countenance, and with that smile she vanished.

“She is propitious, and success is certain,” murmured the Hermit, to the unutterable amazement of his companion, who however made no reply.

Poor Hans knew the crisis of his fate was approaching, and convulsed from head to foot with terror, his teeth chattered so violently, that he had not power to articulate a syllable.

Father Paul, after a few moments of intense excitement, resumed his station near the angle of the wall, and his quick ear in an instant caught the ominous sound.

"Fellow," he cried, "what ails thee, hast thou seen aught to put thy courage to flight?"

"Not so much as a bat," whispered the tailor, "and in truth I never felt braver in my life; but it is cold—very cold Father Paul; I am all in a shiver from head to foot."

"Hush—hush—I hear sounds in the building: there was a distant door closed—now steps approach; be silent and ready."

The tailor indeed heard all, but it neither warmed, nor emboldened him, and so violently was he convulsed by fear, that it seemed every moment, as if his slender limbs would be shaken completely apart. When a key was at length put in the door by some one inside the building, the chattering of his teeth was so loud, that Father Paul, afraid it might betray them in their concealment, grasped him harshly by the arm. The key grated in the lock, the door was slowly pushed open, and the figure of Michael Graaf was for a moment visible in

the light of his own dark lantern, ere he turned its shade; but however brief the view, it sufficed for Father Paul to note the ghastly pallor of the 'guilty man, and to perceive that with his right arm he carried a heavy weight beneath his cloak.

The effect of this apparition on Hans Brunk was electrical; he became still in an instant, and with scarcely less intense interest than the Hermit himself, he watched the Treasurer, as he closed and locked the turret door, and then turned to depart.

His deep quick breathing was distinctly audible as he approached them, and his cloak nearly brushed the garments of Father Paul, as he passed them by.

There was a momentary pause—Hans vainly sought to distinguish the face of his companion; and if he had, he would have failed to have divined the thoughts that then thronged upon the Hermit's brain, ere excited by the mingled passions of contempt and indignation,

he rushed forward, and before Michael Graaf was aware that the eye of a human being was upon him, had grasped him firmly by the collar, and arrested his hurrying steps.

"Villain! what would'st thou?" cried the guilty man, in the tremulous accents of dismay.

"Justice!" was the reply of a voice, that for several moments deprived the Treasurer of all power of resistance. He felt, that if the lightning that flashed above his head, and struck him with its deadly fire, he could not have been more utterly undone.

There are agonies surpassing that of death; there are tortures condensed into a few seconds, exceeding all the inventions of human cruelty, and such were his feelings, as that sound vibrated on his ear.

"Base caitiff, is this the end of all your dear prized honours!" exclaimed the Hermit, and he laughed a low laugh of scorn, that wrought his listener well nigh to madness; "is robbery

the crown of your fair reputation ! Base, paltry hypocrite ! step by step I have watched you descend for gold the ladder of crime, till now, when your greedy hands have seized the treasure of the State, it is time for justice to assert her rights. You are my prisoner !”

“ Madman !” returned Graaf, who had in some measure recovered his faculties, “ of what would you accuse me ?”

“ Of breach of trust, and robbery !” returned Paul in a thrilling voice ! “ the public gold is now upon your person, and twice have you been watched at midnight to the treasury. Ha, Michael Graaf, whence came the gold you gave me in the cavern, but from the public coffers ? I was not to be cheated by your lies.”

“ Unhand me !” said the dismayed culprit, “ we have known each other from our childhood, and four times that sum shall be yours, if you will let me depart in peace.”

“ Peace !” echoed the Hermit ; “ you could not buy it for twenty times the sum. I thought

You knew ere now, that I am not to be bribed."

"If you dare but raise a whisper to my discredit," replied the Treasurer, "I will retort the accusation on yourself, most insolent hypocrite! the coin in your possession will suffice to bring you to the scaffold."

"I heed neither your threats, nor your promises," coolly replied Father Paul, "and till I have seen you committed to the city prison, my grasp shall not be loosened from your throat."

"Ha, insolent! is this your purpose?" retorted Michael disdainfully, "but my word will go further with our public functionaries at any hour, than thine, and I warn thee instantly to release me, or I will call the city watch to take thee into custody for assault and robbery."

But though Graaf thus threatened, there was nothing he so much dreaded as the arrival of witnesses, and eager to escape, he struggled with his utmost force to shake off his resolute

enemy. Encumbered as he was, with his money bag, it was not wonderful that his efforts were vain; but still Father Paul found that it was equally impossible for him, alone and unarmed as he was, to conduct his prisoner to a place of security. Repeatedly did he call on Hans, but no Hans answered to the summons, till remembering that in spite of the account the tailor had given of his neighbours, there was a wine house at no great distance, where, on such a night, the city watch was more likely to be found than on their beat, he raised his voice and cried aloud for assistance.

Michael finding that all hopes of concealment were thus at an end, quickly followed his example, but at the same time aware that escape offered his best chance of safety, he dropt unwillingly his burthen of gold, and recommenced a violent and most determined struggle with his detainer.

Notwithstanding the more luxurious habits of the citizen, he felt he contended for life,

and despair lent him strength almost equal to his opponent. Father Paul, at length, was, by a false step, for an instant thrown off his guard, and Michael Graaf, bearing him to the ground, had nearly shaken off his hold and effected his escape, when the loud cries of the Hermit were answered by rapidly approaching footsteps.

“ Help, help !” exclaimed the Solitary, “ help to arrest a robber ; the plunderer of the public treasury !”

A Strong arm now seized the Treasurer, at the very moment he thought escape was certain, and a well known voice at the same time uttered a cry of encouragement to Father Paul.

The old man started up utterly appalled.

“ Walther Stanz begone, I command you,” he exclaimed. “ Begone, and leave us to our fate.”

“ Never, if Michael Graaf is guilty of the crime you charge him with,” said the youth

firmly, "I should be more abject than he, if I shrunk from my duty at such a moment."

"Boy! what can you know of your duties!" cried the Hermit wildly. "Begone, begone, I command you! by your hopes of peace, here and hereafter, I abjure you to depart."

"Obey him, Walther Stanz," exclaimed Graaf; "the madman's charges against me are utterly false—I have gold at your service, I have a niece—Justine—you love her young man—she shall be yours—I swear she shall be your wife if you will now release me."

"Cunning tempter," returned the youth in a tremulous voice, that gave the Treasurer new hopes, "art thou so utterly corrupt, as to barter such a being as the price of sin!"

"Leave us, Walther!" again cried the Hermit.

"I am innocent, and you may ruin yourself by your obstinacy, but cannot injure me," was Michael's hurried reply.

“ Follow me then, if you have nothing to fear, at once to the prison,” returned the young man ; “ at morning, if you can prove your boasted innocence, the magistrates will set you at liberty, but after what I have heard, it would be guilt in me to do so.”

“ No, no, Walther ! leave us !” persisted Father Paul in accents of the wildest agitation, “ it is my task, not yours, to bring that villain to justice. You are innocent, and young, and happy, your life must not be withered by having the stain of his blood upon your hands.”

Whilst he rapidly uttered these words, he endeavoured with all his strength to free the prisoner from the young man’s hold, but Walther was too powerful for the hands of age to contend with, and the attempt was utterly useless.

“ Father Paul what mean you !” demanded the youth ; “ you called for aid, and when I have brought it, you turn, yourself, against me ?”

But the Treasurer finding promises, nor the commands of any effect on the resolute assailant, and determined at least to be an easy victim, whilst he was dragging the mountaineer, lifted up his voice and cried loudly for help.

Father Paul, strange to say, refused assistance, but on the contrary exhorted him to desist. But when a flash of lightning, had seen the robber burst from the bag, the mountaineer, was in no mood to comply with an unreasonable demand, and with unyielding perseverance to drag the culprit towards the prison.

long, loud shouts from a street which they had gradually approached ; the steps of men came rapidly towards them, Michael renewed his calls for assistance, and in a few seconds, Walther received a tremendous blow across the shoulders from the quarter staff of one of the party, who by his voice, he had already recognized to be Carl Staffer.

“ Here, my friend,” exclaimed the delighted Graaf, to this unexpected assistant, “ let not this scoundrel escape ; he has plundered the treasury — I caught him in the act. He threatened my life—I have struggled long, my strength was well nigh exhausted, but thank Heaven he cannot now escape the headsman !”

“ He lies !” exclaimed the indignant mountaineer, who surrounded and secured by Staffer and his companions, stood for a moment bewildered by this unexpected accusation, “ it is he himself who is the robber.”

“ A likely story truly,” cried the half drunken farmer with a brutal laugh.

"But one to the truth of which I am ready to swear," cried Father Paul in a voice that struck terror into the heart of Michael Graaf.

"And who are you pray, whose oath is [so important?]" asked Staffer sarcastically.

"Father Paul!" was the Hermit's laconic reply, and he whom he addressed was the only man there, not awed by this announcement. But Staffer's strong potations had greatly bewildered his faculties, and he answered the Holy man only by a shout of ridicule and defiance.

"I myself arrested Michael Graaf, this night," continued the Hermit addressing those around, "coming heavily laden from the treasury. I knew it was not his first secret visit, and that he had already applied the public gold to his own purposes, and I strove to secure him with his booty. I was too old, and weak, and this young man came to my assistance!"

"It is a plot between them, for my ruin,"

cried Michael eagerly. "Search me—not a single coin will be found upon me."

"If that is any evidence of innocence, search me likewise!" exclaimed Walther.

A thought of intense agony flashed on the mind of Father Paul! but it was too late. Both the prisoners had flung aside their mantles, and Staffer and his half drunken companions were investigating the contents of their pockets.

On the person of Graaf, as he had asserted, not a coin of any description was discovered, but in Walther's purse, to the horror of the Solitary, were found the Louis he had himself given him the preceding morning. Convinced in his own mind, whence they had been originally taken, he felt with horror, almost maddening, the frightful consequences their possession must in all probability entail upon Walther. Gladly would he have seized them had it been possible, but as they were then situated, he felt the attempt would only confirm the accusations of their enemies.

Michael Graaf had likewise caught a glimpse of the gold, and with exultation surpassing words, he instantly recognised, and swore it was part of the public money, that had been in the treasury above a century.

Walther was confounded. He feared to injure Father Paul, and uttered not a syllable ; but the Hermit lost not an instant in loudly proclaiming, that he himself had given the young man the gold, having received it from Michael Graaf only the night before. But it was in vain he repeated this assertion ; it only excited the ridicule of his half inebriated auditors, and Staffer and his companions clamorously exulting in their discovery, declared the culprit must be carried to prison without delay, whilst Michael Graaf, freed by his ready artifice from all immediate danger, loudly urged them to put their threats in execution.

“ Madman, you know not what you do !” murmured the deep voice of the Hermit close at the Treasurer’s ear, and there was some-

thing so unexpected, so heart-thrilling in the tone, that Michael started back with a shudder of dismay, as if a voice had spoken to him from the depths of the grave.

"Would you rather I had brought the charge against yourself?" he answered in a low whisper, after a moment's pause.

"You durst not—and yet, Michael, if that guiltless young man is your victim, the time may come, when his blood will rise in blacker evidence against you, than all your other sins, if they were ten times multiplied."

"It is you, not me, he has to thank for the coin that will bring him to the scaffold," replied the Treasurer, with a low chuckle of satisfaction, and he turned to follow the prisoner and his escort, who were already some distance in advance.

"Villain! you forget there is more in my cavern," muttered the Hermit, still keeping close at his side," and I warn you, if you do but injure a hair of his head, the tortures of

the rack will be as nothing to the punishment with which I will avenge his sufferings upon thee," and with these portentous words this mysterious being strode away, and was lost in the darkness.

For a brief space the courage of the guilty Treasurer utterly forsook him. Terrified and bewildered by the intricate web in which he had involved himself, he hesitated to pursue his infamous advantage, to what he knew must be the inevitable disgrace and ruin of a fellow creature;—but he saw no means of receding without exposing his own guilt, and rather exulting that he had found a way to give pain to Father Paul, than dismayed by his warnings, he hastily determined to persevere at all hazards, and make the most of an accusation that his ready wit had so expediently suggested to him.

He still heard the voices of Staffer and his companions in the distance, and convinced he could readily overtake them, he returned ere he

did so, to secure the gold and the lantern he had cast from him in the fray.

But though he well remembered the spot, and the moon shone full and bright when he reached it, not a trace of either could he find, and after a vain and anxious search, he was compelled to depart without the wages for which he had that night plunged so deeply into the slough of iniquity. When he overtook his unfortunate victim and the rest of the party, they were already near the gates of the prison.

The thunder had subsided, but the rain fell in torrents, and as these idle wassaillers alternately thundered against the gates of the old building for admission, and murmured at the ill luck of being abroad on such a night, none thought for an instant of the terrible position of the youth they were so eager to deliver to captivity and death ; not one, amidst his own selfish annoyance, at so transient an incon-

venience, gave one moment's sympathy to their captive.

Yet the agony of Walther, as with a sinking heart he gazed on those old walls he had never expected to enter, was such as few men are ever doomed to suffer. His horror of captivity was great, for the mountain and the free wide air had been his home from childhood, and he shrunk from the idea of a prison cell, as from a living grave. But the imputation under which he lay weighed yet heavier on his soul; he would have preferred death to disgrace, yet he saw no hope of disproving the infamous accusations of his powerful enemy; not a gleam. He thought of Justine; of her wretchedness, and her despair when his fate should become known to her; but even in this terrible moment it consoled and supported him, to think that she at least would believe him innocent, whatever might be the result.

The goaler, at length aroused from his sleep

unbarred the prison door, and Staffer confusedly repeating the charges against the captive, delivered him into his custody. Walther made no resistance, but with a deep sigh he turned to look once more on the wide expanse of heaven. The clouds were broken and dispersed, and the moon silvering the edges of the wild fantastic masses, where the storm still flashed afar off, shone with unshadowed radiance over the high summits of his own native mountain, and the remembrance of his mother, and poor Fritz, brought tears of sorrow into his eyes.

In another moment the closing gate shut out the beautiful spectacle, and he was left alone with the goaler, to be led through the dark and dreary passages, to the gloomy cell where he was to await the decision of the city judges on the charges brought against him.

Michael Graaf from a distance had watched the whole of these proceedings, though he cautiously forbore to take any part in them, and as soon as he was assured that Staffer and

his companions had returned to their pipes and their bottle, he proceeded with rapid steps to his own dwelling.

The thoughts that haunted him there, during the remainder of the night, sufficed to banish sleep, but instead of tracing his sufferings to their real causes, his early crimes and growing selfishness, he laid the whole blame on Justine, and his weakness in yielding to her entreaties, which had driven him to supply the want of Staffer's money, by a disgraceful robbery.

He remembered with horror the mysterious warnings of the Hermit, the wildest conjectures as to their import distracted his brain; but none were near the truth, nor had he any clue to guide his surmises; though at times he half resolved to seek another interview with this mysterious being, his courage quickly failed, and then his thoughts wandered from the past to the future.

He had no personal enmity against Walther Stanz, more than as the lover of Justine, and

that was feeble, compared to the evil he had already inflicted on him, yet he clearly saw, and saw it with infinite horror, that the facts which in self-defence he must swear against him would inevitably bring him to the scaffold.

Little had he foreseen that murder would be the result of the long course of petty crime by which he had worked his way to affluence and power, or at the first step in guilt, that fatal fat of some men's destiny, he would at once and for ever have started back from the gulph of temptation.

But it was now too late, and the slave of his own sins, he was every moment hurried to the commission of enormities, from which, in the silent moments of reflection, his better nature shrunk back, bewildered and appalled.

END OF VOL. I.

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THE THIRST FOR GOLD,

BY

HANNAH D. BURDON,

AUTHOR OF

"SEYMOUR OF SUDLEY," "THE LOST EVIDENCE,"
"THE FRIENDS OF FONTAINEBLEAU."

To what gulphs
A single deviation from the track
Of human duties leads.

BYRON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE THIRST FOR GOLD.

CHAPTER I.

“ A kind and gentle counsellor is this
One who pours balm into a wounded soul,
And mitigates the griefs he cannot heal.”

SOUTHEY. RODERICK.

THE tumult in the bosom of Father Paul when he parted from Michael Graaf, and strode with hurried steps through the storm, was wild and ungovernable. In his lonely cavern the ancho-rite had for years believed himself a Stoic ; in the absence of excitement, he imagined that apathy and indifference, had come with age to dull his sympathy with human suffering, and

to quench the vivid flames of passion and of feeling in his worn out heart ; but imagination had deluded him.

No man knows the strength of his love, till its object is taken from him, nor the powers of his own soul till they are called into action.

Whilst before the altar of his God, this enthusiastic being had devoted his affections to heaven, his early passion for the unfortunate Clarice still burnt unquenched in his bosom—less fiercely than when first kindled, but like a distant fire, tinging every object of his life with its undying glow ; and the tenderness he had felt for Walther Stanz when a child, had deepened with years, till he now bore him all a father's love.

That night for the first time he became fully aware of the force of this attachment, and that night, when he beheld him exposed to infamy and death, he for the first time knew how entirely his own peace of mind depended on his welfare.

Yet even amidst his sorrow, and it was very great, there was a rapture in his deep emotion, and though at one moment he brushed the tears from his eyes with a sensation of shame at his agitation, the next he exulted that solitude had not yet deadened in his heart, the noblest and best feelings of humanity. It seemed as if the voice of heaven whispered to his soul, that in this moment of weakness, he was a better and a wiser man, than during all the long years of stern composure, during which he had striven to wean himself from earth.

But even his love for Walther Stanz, could not make him forego the punishment of Michael Graf. He doubted not, that by giving up Vergani's receipt, without further prosecuting his claims against him, he might purchase the young man's liberation, but he determined to ~~may~~ by every other means in his power the accomplishment of this desirable result, before he humiliated himself to ask a favour from the

Treasurer ; and moreover he felt that for Walther's future welfare and honest reputation in life, it was absolutely necessary to procure his honourable acquittal by public and indisputable evidence, of his entire innocence of the robbery of which he was accused.

To save his life he felt was of little consequence, if his character were blasted ; he had striven as far as was in his power, to make him all that was good and great, and he resolved rather to let him die, than tamely to purchase his dishonour, with the very money he had claimed for his benefit.

In truth it was for Walther only that Father Paul had sought to wring the ten thousand Florins from Michael Graaf ; he had himself no need of gold, but he knew the world sufficiently, to be convinced, that it was absolutely necessary to procure for this young man a place in society, suitable to the education he had given him, and to remove the obstacle his poverty opposed to his marriage with Justine.

He himself had once loved—aged and lonely as he was, he still loved, and the remembrance of all he had suffered from love's bitter disappointment, combined with certain mysterious feelings engendered by solitude, and amounting at times to superstitious delusion, and a persuasion of having unearthly commands and unearthly wishes to fulfil, made him earnestly participate in the success of Walther's attachment to Justine, whom he justly believed, in spite of her relationship to the Treasurer, to be worthy of his most devoted attachment.

Action is absolutely necessary for health of mind, as well as body, and with the necessity for activity, all the early powers of Father Paul burst forth with renewed vigour, and instead of being dismayed by the adverse events of the night, after their first stunning effects had subsided, he was aroused to look more widely around him in search of means to effect the liberation of Walther, and to secure his ultimate prosperity.

He determined not to leave the city in his present uncertainty as to his fate. With Hans he was sure to find shelter for the night, and highly incensed against him for his cowardly desertion, at the moment of danger, and eager to give expression to his indignation, he speedily resolved to return at once to his dwelling.

A light, as he approached it, was glimmering from the little casement, deeply seated in the old stone wall, but the cellar beneath was so intensely dark, that with no small difficulty he found his way to the wooden staircase at the further end of it. As he slowly groped his way to the upper story, he was surprised to hear voices from the chamber he approached, and never placing entire reliance on the fidelity of the tailor, even though he was the brother of the faithful and devoted Lena, he paused to listen ere he advanced further. But though he stood for nearly five minutes, he heard only the voice of Hans uttering broken exclamations

at intervals, to which no answer was returned, till convinced that he was alone, the Hermit pushed open the door and entered without further hesitation.

A few wood embers still smouldered on the hearth, and a single rushlight shed its feeble rays over the humble room, disclosing to Father Paul a spectacle that filled him with amazement, and displaying to the terrified Hans, the awful figure of the Solitary, as with stern and lowering brow, he paused for an instant on the threshold, to regard with curiosity and surprise the occupation of the little tailor.

He was kneeling at the side of a low pallet, that occupied a corner of the chamber between the door and the window, chafing the hands of a female, who apparently insensible lay stretched on this humble bed.

It was Justine.

Her hat was thrown aside—her long hair perfectly saturated with wet, fell in disorder

around her—her eyes were closed, but tears hung on her pale cheeks, like dew on marble, as her beautiful head partly drooped from the pillow intended to support it; one lifeless hand lay upon her bosom, the other rested unconsciously between the fingers of Hans, who terrified by the length of her swoon, vainly strove by friction to restore its suspended circulation.

“Father Paul, I rejoice to see you, for here is urgent need of your skill,” said the little man, when the momentary pause of the Hermit had afforded him time to collect his scattered faculties, and assume a tranquillity he did not feel.

“Has she been long thus?” inquired the Solitary, from whom the sight of Justine, in such a position, for the moment banished the remembrance of his anger against his insignificant host.

“I met her when I ran from you in search of assistance to arrest Michael Graaf,” returned Hans, adroitly putting the best face he could

on his cowardice, "and she had no sooner heard of her uncle's guilt, and seen Walther rush off to help you to secure him, than with a shrill cry she fell like a lifeless creature to the ground. Truly it grieves me to see how her damask kirtle is stained with mud, but even if she had given me warning, I could not have prevented her fall, for she is taller than I am by a quarter of an ell at least."

"Coward!" returned Styger, in a low stern voice, "this is only a small item of the incalculable mischief you have wrought this night."

"In truth I have done nothing in the matter, but bring the maiden here with infinite pains and difficulty, at the expence of my doublet, which split in the arm-hole, just as—"

"Peace varlet!" cried the Hermit in a louder tone, "you know your guilt as well as I do; you know I gave you an absolute command that Walther Stanz should not be involved in

this enterprise ; yet in open defiance of my warning, you sent him at the very moment of peril, to face the danger you fled from. This is one consequence," he added, taking the cold damp hand of Justine in his, and pressing his fingers on the slowly returning pulse, "there are others you will probably have cause to lament, to the latest moment of your wretched life."

"Is the Treasurer secured?" demanded the tailor in tremulous accents, without making other reply to the Hermit's angry invective".

"Inquire rather after Walther Stanz, the noble youth whom you sent like a lamb to the slaughter. Oh, base selfishness, that heeds not what ills it piles upon the head of others, provided it can itself escape unscathed. Worthless things live long, and truly a paltry existence like thine, was a precious possession, to secure at the expense of such a life as that of Walther Stanz!"

"A worm takes no more pleasure in dying

than an eagle," said the little man, but the remainder of his speech, whatever he intended it to be, was put a stop to by Justine half raising her head from the pillow, and murmuring in scarcely articulate accents, as she gazed bewildered around her, "Walther Stanz? who spoke of Walther Stanz? call him back; oh, call him hither, for I cannot—"

Again she sunk down on the pillow, and her long dark lashes bedewed with tears, again rested on her colourless cheeks. When her eyes, after the lapse of a few minutes, once more unclosed, they were raised with a vacant look of inquiry and amazement on Father Paul. Ere long she evidently recognised him, and seizing both his hands in hers, she implored him to bring Walther to her.

"He will return at sunrise," murmured the Hermit, in a soft voice of compassionate tenderness.

"Will he?" she rejoined; "then I will wait patiently," and with a sweet and placid

smile, she again lay down, and turning her head away, in less than five minutes her soft breathing told that she had sunk into a deep, calm sleep.

Father Paul then whispered to his companion, that as she would probably remain at rest till morning, they likewise had better seek repose. The tailor had not a second bed to offer, but the Hermit had no need of such accommodation, and whilst Hans deposited himself in a cupboard full of shavings, he lay down on the floor, and with a block of wood for his pillow, soon forgot all the hurried events of the night in profound repose.

At morn he was aroused by the sunbeams falling through the little casement on his face, and when he started up, he was greatly surprised to see that Justine had already arisen, and having unfastened the casement, lent forward, that the cool air might blow upon her burning brow.

At the first movement of the Hermit, she

turned anxiously round, and without appearing to heed her own strange position, demanded if he could give her any intelligence of Walther.

"Oh, Father Paul, what evil has befallen him?" she wildly added, when she saw the agitated expression of the old man's countenance, who scarcely knew how to reply to this sudden demand, "they have not murdered him?"

"Compose yourself, my poor child," said Styger, "he is alive and unharmed."

"And my uncle?"

"Is asleep in his own bed, to the best of my knowledge."

"And the charges against him are false? Oh, tell me so at once, Father Paul, for you know not what I have suffered. I have had wild and horrible dreams."

"Time will show," was the Hermit's laconic reply.

"Is it possible you believe him guilty?"

cried the agitated girl? "Can it be possible he is so lost?"

"He has added a yet blacker sin to that of robbery," added the old man; "he has accused, and caused Walther Stanz to be arrested for the crime of which he is himself guilty."

"Father Paul, what mean you?"

"I mean, that when Staffer came at his cries he declared that not he, but the young mountaineer had robbed the Treasury. Certain stolen coins, of which I cannot now give you the history, were found in Walther's purse, and gave such confirmation to the tale, that the youth's protestations and my testimony were alike unavailing, and he is committed to the city prison."

"But did my uncle know he was innocent?"

"He knew that he himself alone was guilty," was the Hermit's caustic reply.

"Can any human being be so wicked!" exclaimed Justine simply.

"When you have lived as long as I have maiden," said her companion, with a bitter smile, "you will know better, how the love of gold blackens the whole mind, as certain poisons do the body."

"But my uncle has not a cruel heart," said the girl, "and when he has turned all suspicion from himself, he will doubtless contrive to let Walther escape."

"He was a fool to forget, that there is other evidence," returned the Solitary, "and that many must be silenced, ere he is secure."

"Ay, truly," said Hans, who had now arisen "here is the bag of gold he let fall in the fray, is worth fifty witnesses, and here is his own dark lantern, to throw more light on the subject than he will think quite acceptable."

"Ha!" exclaimed Father Paul, when he beheld these important evidences of Michael's guilt in the hands of the tailor, "where found you these?"

"The Treasurer threw them away in the

scuffle," he replied, "and I picked them up, as I thought they were goods too precious to be left in the highway."

"This is indeed important," said the Hermit, "and however corrupt may be our judges, they cannot surely sacrifice the innocent, in defiance of such powerful evidence; even though the accuser be one of their own fraternity."

"Oh, Father Paul," cried Justine, who had hitherto appeared stunned and bewildered by the strange tidings she had heard, "surely there must be some way to save Walther, without bringing my uncle to disgrace and death."

"Maiden," said the Hermit, with even more than his usual solemn enthusiasm, "justice is from the Lord, and it befits not weak mortals to allow human affections to step between the guilty and their punishment. If the pure and gentle were to shield the wicked from the sword of judgment, the world would ere long be

was a den of thieves, where the feeble would be at the mercy of the spoiler."

"But though my uncle may have erred in a moment of weakness, he cannot be so guilty as you imagine," she persisted.

"Poor child! the extent of his crimes is far beyond the calculation of an innocent mind like thine," returned Styger, "and may it ever be so!"

"Of all that I know nothing," said Justine who in truth believed Father Paul was labouring under some strange delusion, "but to my certain knowledge, he has a kind heart, and when I prove to him that Walther could not last night have robbed the treasury, as we were talking peaceably under the old church wall, at the very moment he is charged with having done so, I feel certain he will obtain an immediate order for his release."

"And can you swear this?" demanded the Hermit eagerly.

"I can!" said the maiden blushing deeply

for it was with great pain she made the confession, "and moreover, whatever evil tongues may say, I am ready to swear it in open court, if it can profit Walther."

"It may save his life," was the laconic reply.

"But in truth," continued the girl with modest confusion, "I would rather say it to my uncle in private, than before all the city magistrates, so if you think it will have such weight, I will go to him directly, and tell him that I, and I only, am to blame, for Walther's being within the city walls last night."

"You had better tell him likewise," said the tailor, with a significant nod, "that we have his own lantern. You need not mention my name, nor say any thing about the money, at present, but if the worst comes to the worst, I can swear to a few odd circumstances, as well as you, or Father Paul."

The first wish of the Hermit was to see Walther Stanz at liberty, and exonerated from the disgraceful charges, Michael Graaf had

had brought against him, and if Justine's intercession could effect this, he felt a great advantage would be gained; he readily therefore agreed to her making the attempt she proposed, and as soon as she judged that the household of Michael Graaf was astir, she hastened to return thither.

But though the poor girl ventured with such apparent courage to advocate the cause of the oppressed, it was with mingled feelings of fear and shame, that she approached her uncle's dwelling. Little had she imagined when she left it, that she should be compelled to remain abroad the whole night, or even Walther's request would have failed to induce her to venture forth at such an hour. But repentance was vain, and her only hope now was to be able to regain her own chamber, before Dame Babette, or any of the household, had discovered her absence. This she fortunately accomplished. Her uncle she was sure could have no suspicion of her having been abroad, for as he left

the door upon the latch, so he found it when he returned—but to him she felt with deep anxiety the whole story must be revealed.

“ Yet why should I be ashamed,” she thought; “ I am innocent, and I ought rather to rejoice than grieve at my humiliation, if Walther, by this means, can be rescued from disgrace, and perhaps even death!”

Strengthened by this consideration, she no longer shrunk from making the necessary confession to her uncle. The fact of having gone secretly to meet a lover he had commanded her to discard, appeared so insignificant, when compared with Walther's danger, that she forgot the probability of its exciting his violent displeasure, and hoping all things, she awaited with infinite impatience for the appearance of the Treasurer.

Thus it ever is, that woman, the most timid and cautious of created beings, forgets her fears when the safety of those she loves is at stake, and utterly heedless of self, and all the world

contains except this cherished object, encounters disgrace, and poverty, and even death with unwavering resolution.

But though Justine for the first time in her life had no dread of her uncle's wrath, she felt a strong reluctance to betray, even to him, the deep interest she took in Walther's fate.

"But this is folly!" she thought. "We have plighted our vows, and why should I be ashamed to confess he is dearer to me than all the world beside. When Father Paul told us to stand by one another, how little did I dream the hour was so near, when he would have such urgent need of my feeble help. I would not hesitate to lay down my life for him, and I will no longer shrink from acknowledging my love."

CHAPTER II.

" My advocacy is not now in tune ;
What I can do, I will ; and more I will
Than for myself I dare : let that suffice you."
SHAKESPEARE'S OTHELLO.

Michael Graaf at length arose from his uneasy couch, and no sooner had he descended to the breakfast room, than Justine followed him thither. With apparent composure she entered his presence, but her heart beat wildly, for she felt that the fate of Walther Stanz would in a few brief moments be decided.

Anxious to discover by his looks if his tem-

per was propitious, she had no sooner closed the door of the apartment, where he sat with a cup of coffee on the table before him, than she glanced with hurried perturbation at his countenance. She absolutely started with dismay, when she beheld his pale and haggard visage, where the traces of guilt and remorse were graven in such deep and legible characters, that even this inexperienced girl, unpractised in all that appertained to crime, felt with full conviction, the truth of Father Paul's disjointed accusations.

Till that instant she had not suspected him of more than petty sins, such as many wary men know how to commit without coming within the pale of the law, but from that moment, she experienced a sad, nay an awful certainty, that the secrets of that soul, must indeed be dark, which in one night could leave such fearful traces. She was unconscious that her own worn countenance was scarcely less remarkable, till Michael Graaf looking up, as

she approached, after gazing fixedly at her for some moments, abruptly asked if she was ill.

Her cheeks flushed instantly, of a crimson hue, as she replied, that she had heard something that greatly distressed her.

“And pray what may that be?” enquired Graaf, with a sneer, “though in good sooth I believe it would not be difficult to guess, when a girl’s sweetheart is sent to prison, for a public robbery. Truly Justine, your friend Walther seems to have been determined to prove my wisdom in commanding you to cut all acquaintance with such a beggarly rascal, by the strongest argument in his power, and as I suppose by your looks you have heard all, I trust you are now ready to admit, that your lover is as paltry a fellow, as I took him for.”

There is a wonderful advantage in being the first to state a desperate case, and of this Michael Graaf, in thus attacking his niece, seemed determined to avail himself; but he gained nothing by it, for he was no sooner silent, than

Justine calmly replied that she had certainly heard reports to Walther's disadvantage, but she did not believe a word of them.

"The girl is mad!" returned the Treasurer petulantly, "I tell you I seized him myself in the very act. Coin, that I can swear to as part of the public treasure, was found in his pocket, and before I returned home, I saw him given into the goaler's hands."

"And when did all this happen, may I ask?" inquired Justine, though without raising her eyes from the ground.

"The minster clock struck midnight scarcely five minutes before I arrested the rascal, at the very door of the Treasury."

"That was impossible!" replied the maiden looking full at her uncle, and speaking in a bold and resolute voice that greatly startled the guilty man.

"What mean you?" he falteringly demanded.

it was not Walther Stanz, for he standing at my side under the old porch, and had not left me for more than a quarter of an hour before !”

“ You are surely dreaming, Justine,” turned Graaf, with uncontrollable agitation.

“ I am neither dreaming now, nor then,” she rejoined. “ Both Walther and I heard you call wildly for assistance afterwards left me for the first time since our meeting. Again I say, if the Treacherer robbed at midnight, it was not by Stanz.”

High wrought as was the resolution of Justine, in her noble self devotion, this moment made her quail, when she

and when, as if to conceal his agitation, he at length passed his hand over his moist, pale brow, it shook like an aspen leaf.

"Shameless girl," he said arising and leaning his clenched hands on the table, so as partly to support him, as he bent forward and gazed sternly upon her, "have you the audacity to tell me that, in defiance not only of my commands but of every rule of decency and decorum befitting a modest maiden to hold sacred, you dared to leave this house, and go alone to meet this young villain, at such an hour?"

"It was wrong, I admit!" answered the girl with unruffled calmness; "but as good may result from it, I do not blush to confess to my uncle that I did so, and I feel certain, that he will rejoice as much as I do at my disobedience, if it prove the means of saving an innocent man from undeserved punishment and disgrace."

"And is this the return for all the breeding I have bestowed upon you?" exclaimed Graaf, "a fine story truly, for the town to get hold of!"

your character girl will be ruined for ever, if this gets wing."

"I care not!" returned Justine, "if it be needful, I am ready to swear to all I have said in open court."

"Ha!" cried Michael. "The company you have kept seems wonderfully to have improved your modesty madam, but as you can swear so much, perhaps you can swear to the real culprit likewise!"

Justine cast her eyes on the ground, but though she remained silent, her manner redoubled the Treasurer's anxiety. He longed, yet feared to question her further, and whilst still undecided how to renew a conversation, on every word of which such vital interests depended, Justine suddenly advanced towards him. There was a calm decision in her manner, before which his spirit quailed, and with unsteady eye he vainly sought to endure the searching glance of hers, when standing close at his side, she at length broke silence.

"Uncle," she said, "I am not here merely to confess a fault, and be chided for it. I have come to plead for the life and liberty of an innocent fellow creature."

"For a scoundrel, who has turned your brain with flattery and lies!" cried Michael in a voice of thunder.

"I confess I love him, and I am proud to confess it, for he is an honest man," said the girl as simply as before, "but there is no need to discuss that matter at present. Had he been a stranger to me, I should have held myself equally bound to assert his innocence, when so entirely convinced of it, as I now am. But though I have spoken plainly to my uncle, I am sure he would not willingly force me to make such disclosures in open court."

"If you are bent on disgracing yourself, how can I prevent it," was the Treasurer's surly reply.

"By at once procuring the release of Wal-

"It would be perfect madness."

"Not at all! your colleagues are ever guided by your judgment in all important matters, and you have only to say in excuse for such an act, that the evidence against him proved insufficient."

"But there was coin found on his person. No, no—swear what you please about innocence and such stuff, that is proof enough to place any man's head in jeopardy."

"Ay, if you can swear that coin was in the treasury yesterday, but not without," she returned, gazing steadily on Michael's countenance the while.

His eyes sunk beneath hers, and his compressed lips quivered, but he attempted to hide his agitation, by telling her to hold her tongue and begone, nor pester him longer by talking of what she did not understand.

In other times when Justine had a point to gain with her uncle, she had been wont when entreaty failed, to appeal to his affections and

rarely without success, but her own heart was that morning so utterly chilled, by her suspicions, that every thought, or feeling of regard was banished from her mind, and incapable of hypocrisy, she never sought to soften when she failed to persuade ! nevertheless she was determined not to yield the point so soon, and when Graaf repeated his command for her to depart, she calmly told him she would go the instant she had received his order for Walther's release, " I am sure," she added, " my uncle is too just to wish to punish the innocent for the guilty."

" Girl, what do you dare to insinuate !" exclaimed the Treasurer, whom the consciousness of guilt made prompt to take offence.

" Oh, uncle Michael, if I must tell you all, there are strange suspicions abroad," was Justine's reply, and utterly overcome by her contending feelings, she sunk on a chair, and burst into a passionate flood of tears.

The old man turned paler than before, and

it was with difficulty he could ask his niece, what she had heard that thus distressed her.

"There are men who swear, that you, and you only are the robber," she replied.

"Name them," exclaimed Graaf with breathless anxiety.

"Father Paul, the Hermit, is one," she returned.

"Base, shameless hypocrite ! he has long been my enemy, but I did not believe him capable of such wanton wickedness ! where did you see this sanctified scoundrel, Justine, that he could pour these lies into your ear. Methinks my own niece, the child of my bounty, ought to have been the last to listen to them. Your midnight rambles have led you certainly into strange company. Where did you meet this lying villain I say ?"

"That matters little," returned the girl, "but be assured, he declares he saw you come out of the treasury last night, with a bag of gold; that moreover he has further and stronger

proof against you, and that if Walther is not released, he will spare no pains to establish his innocence and your guilt."

"Rascal!" muttered Graaf between his teeth.

"Yet uncle," continued the girl, "there are many who hold this pious man in high esteem, and it might be more prudent not to drive him to extremities!"

"It is a vile conspiracy Justine!" answered Michael, "and surely you would not wish me to heap infamy on my own head, by crouching like a guilty man before this foul tongued calumniator. But he shall find that I am not a worm that he can crush at his pleasure! I stand high in office and reputation amongst my fellow citizens, and my brother magistrates know me too well, to put my word in competition with the oath of a beggarly hypocrite, that lives on the charity of the superstitious. Who knows, but he is some common thief who has taken the Hermit's garb to elude the ven-

"All this may be true," replied Justine, "but the old feelings of childhood brought to her eyes as she took the hand of the Treasurer, and added in a thrilling voice, "I wish from my heart you may be able to prove his accusations false, but he has your lantern."

"Confusion!" he exclaimed, and turning from her, he strode to the further end of the room.

The agony of Justine was scarcely lessened in his own at beholding this fearful confirmation of her worst suspicions, and it was some minutes till she was sufficiently collected to avail herself of the Treasurer's agitation in renewing her suit for Walther's liberation.

in my presence, that instant I cast you off for ever! no worthless jade shall be nurtured beneath my roof, who is plotting for my destruction with my enemies. Get to your chamber, and meddle not in matters beyond your comprehension. Go to your chamber, I say! and be it at your peril to leave it, till I give you permission. I will have no more love making at midnight, no more intrigues under my roof. If you cannot conduct yourself with propriety, it behoves me to keep you in order. Nay, no answer—I have listened too long already. Get you to your chamber I say.”

Dejected and dismayed, Justine left her uncle's presence, but instead of retiring to her room in obedience to his commands, she immediately left the house.

She felt she ought not to lose a moment in communicating to Father Paul the failure of her intercession for Walther, lest the Hermit's exertions for the prisoner might consequently be delayed.

She found him still awaiting her in the tailor's humble dwelling, and not at all disappointed by the result of her interview with Michael.

"I marvel greatly he dared to set me at defiance," he said, "and yet he is so entangled in the net of his own villany, that I suspect his faculties are scarcely equal to the emergency. It is not improbable however that before he ventured so far, he was assured of some assistance, of which we know nothing."

"Mayhap he expects his friends the French to come hither in a day or two, to set matters to right with their bayonets, and wipe out any deficiencies in the Treasury, by taking possession of it altogether," said little Hans.

"I have reason to suspect something of this kind," returned Styger, "and if so, I must be prompt in my measures, or he will yet escape the punishment his crimes so richly deserve."

"Oh, Father Paul!" said Justine, weeping bitterly, "if you can save Walther's life be satisfied, and do not deal harshly with my

uncle! He is not so bad as you believe. **Indeed** he has always been as kind as a father to me, but troubles and vexations have altered him of late, and matters may appear worse than they really are."

"What was he doing in the Treasury at midnight, Justine?" said the Hermit. "But no more of that now; he is your uncle, and you are right to defend him as long as you can; yet it grieves me, poor child, to think you have no better protector. You must return to his house, and remain there till I give you warning to appear at Walther's trial. You will not then shrink from swearing in open court to what you have already told me."

"Fear not," she replied.

"Hans will continue to convey tidings of our proceedings to you, and now farewell! I have much to do that Michael Graaf dreams not of."

"Shall you see Walther?" inquired the girl, blushing deeply.

“In my Hermit’s garb I shall obtain admission, without doubt, to his prison,” replied Father Paul. “I have sent for it to the mountain, and shall visit him before noon.”

“And must you go alone,” was her timid demand.

“Without doubt! but I will tell him the deep interest you take in his fate.”

“And I will meet you as you come out and hear how he bears his sad confinement.”

“At half an hour after noon, be in the adjoining street, and I will give you tidings of him,” said Father Paul, and with this engagement they parted, the girl to return to her wretched home, and the Hermit to carry Michael Graaf’s lantern, and the bag of gold picked up by Hans in the square, to one of the principal Magistrates of the city.

Father Paul knew Herr Wendel to be an honourable and upright man, and to him therefore he deemed it most advisable to give these important proofs in charge, and at the same

time, to relate all he knew of the occurrences of the past night. Of the coin he had previously received from Michael, his promise of secrecy prevented him then making any mention, but as he foresaw that the Treasurer would, in all probability, be unable to fulfil the remainder of his contract at the appointed time, he had no doubt that before Walther was brought to trial, he should be released from this engagement, and at full liberty to account for the young man's possession of the suspicious coins, which had so fatally confirmed the accusation of his enemy.

Herr Wendel, who was greatly surprised by the visit of the Solitary, was yet more so to discover that this man, whom common fame had taught him to consider as a wild and visionary enthusiast, was as shrewd and rational as himself, and awed by the dignity which the Hermit's usual lofty tone of thought imparted to his manner, he treated him with the utmost reverence and respect. He assured

him, in reply to his communications, that as far as was in his power, the examination of the circumstances connected with the robbery should be conducted with the strictest regard to truth and justice, and that the trial of Walther Stanz should take place as speedily as possible.

Without hesitation he gave him an order for admission to the prisoner; and Father Paul, on leaving his house, hurried with all speed to avail himself of it.

He found Walther Stanz in a wretched cell, from whose grating only a narrow strip of sky was visible, yet undismayed by his position, or the accusations brought against him. He was supported by the consciousness of innocence; and solitude, and idleness, and captivity, had not yet had time to weigh down the elastic spirit of his youth, or sadden his sanguine temper by their wearing monotony.

During the hours he had passed alone, he had thought more of Justine than of himself;

sometimes deploring her relationship to the guilty Treasurer, at others beguiling the hours by pleasant dreams of their future happiness, when their marriage should have liberated her from this bad man's authority, till these soft thoughts were banished by indignation at the false charges made against himself, and he burned with impatience to stand face to face with his base accusers, and publicly convict them of their falsehood.

He eagerly listened to the account Father Paul gave him of the evidence he could produce in his favour ; to that of Justine he alone objected.

He would not, he said, though his life depended on it, allow her modesty to be wounded by publishing the story of their meeting. " Our love is too fair a blossom, Father Paul," he continued, " to be blighted by the public eye, and I were little worthy of her, if I could allow her to be dragged into Court, and requite the confidence she has reposed in me, by

forcing her, for my own personal advantage, to confess to any ear but mine, the secret of our attachment."

"Justine has already told her uncle all," said the Hermit, "and rely on it, Walther, though her mind is innocent and pure as an angel's, no false shame will make her shrink from exerting herself in your behalf to the very utmost of her power. She is fair, and therefore many men will envy you her love, but her mind, though few can so well appreciate it, is the noblest dowry of this generous and single-hearted creature. What shall I say to her from you Walther? she is waiting without to hear my tidings."

"I would fain send her some more substantial token of my love, than words," returned the prisoner, "but I am stripped of every thing. Yet no—not quite; I have still this little wooden cross, that I have worn from childhood. It is of small worth, though my mother, who hung it round my neck, ever tells

me, I should set great store by it. Give it to **Justine**, Father Paul, and assure her, it is all I have to bestow."

The Hermit with an eager hand received the simple triuket, and after gazing at it till his eyes filled with tears, he inquired if he really had nothing else to send, that he must part with a thing he had carried about him so long.

"It is the fittest type of the feeling that should sustain us both, amidst the trials of this life," was Walther's reply.

"Doubtless!" returned the old man, in an agitated voice, "but your mother hung it around your neck, as a charm, and it would grieve her much to know you had parted with it."

"Not when it is bestowed upon Justine," said the prisoner, "therefore, give it her, I entreat you Father Paul, and tell her, the day I trust will yet arrive, when I may be able to redeem it, by a gift more worthy her acceptance."

The Hermit lost in deep thought, seemed scarcely to hear these words, but he promised compliance with Walther's wishes, and having given him his blessing, and told him to trust in the protection of heaven, he soon after left the prison. He met Justine where she had promised to await him, and she eagerly listened to his tidings. She wept, and yet she smiled, when he gave her the little cross, and added to Walther's message, his own solemn injunction to guard it more carefully, than if it were diamonds.

"It is coarse and rudely carved, Justine," he said, "but you may live to learn that it has a value you wot not of; and however strange and improbable you may think it, remember, that on that wooden trinket the fate of Walther may one day depend."

It needed not this mysterious announcement to enhance the value of the cross in the estimation of Justine. It was Walther's gift; she felt it was the pledge of his unalterable love,

and as such was more precious to her than any **thing** that wealth could have purchased. With **a** trembling hand she received it from the Hermit, and after pressing it with silent earnestness **to** her lips, she fastened it round her neck, and **hid** it with unspeakable delight next her heart.

Father Paul then told her, that he should **visit** the prison again on the morrow, and she **promised** to await him on the same spot. But **one** day can make strange alterations in the **course** of human destiny, and the morrow often **dawns** not to fulfil the promises of the past, but **to** bring forth wild vicissitudes, that wisdom **has** neither foretold by its calculations, nor **imagination** pictured in its visions of futurity.

CHAPTER III.

"The Frenchmen are our enemies; go to then. I ask but this; can he that speaks with the tongue of an enemy, be a good counsellor or no?"

SHAKESPEARE. HENRY VI.

Not many minutes after Father Paul had parted from Justine, as he was passing down a narrow miserable court, leading towards the Lake whence the tall projecting houses nearly excluded the light of day, he was suddenly accosted by a stranger, who unobserved by the Hermit, had for some time kept watch upon his movements.

He was a little thin man, whose steps were quick and brisk, with his face and figure so completely enveloped in a long, dark riding mantle, that it would have been impossible, even for those best acquainted with him to have recognised either.

His voice was likewise entirely unknown to Father Paul, though when he politely requested to be permitted to have some conversation with him on a business of earnest importance, he instantly detected that he spoke with a foreign accent.

"Is it my religious assistance, you need?" enquired the Hermit gravely.

"Not at present," answered the stranger, and he muttered one or two words, which at once induced the Hermit to arrest his steps, whilst he at the same time replied, that the public street was no place for a conference such as his unknown companion requested.

"I have already been to Hans Brunk's in

quest of you," returned the man, "and he pointed you out to me, as you passed across the Square, but as we are now at some distance from his dwelling, will you permit me to request you to accompany me into a house in this neighbourhood, where we may converse in perfect tranquillity and security. To be frank with you, Holy Father, the matter is urgent, and I have already lost too much time on my mission."

"Methinks, if my suspicions as to the nature of your business are just," said Father Paul, "you had better visit Michael Graaf, than seek for me, if your time is so precious. But I am willing to hear what you have to say, where and when you please."

"Then follow me!" returned his companion, and with a rapid step he darted on before him. More than once the unknown turned to assure himself that the Hermit had not deserted him, before he entered the dark and dirty passage of a poor neglected dwelling, and ascending the

stairs to the second floor, like one well accustomed to the way, threw open the door of a wretched chamber.

Father Paul had no sooner crossed the threshold, than his conductor made fast the door in the inside, and when the old man looked around the dimly lighted room, whence the dirt on the windows half excluded the beams of day, he was surprised to see furniture of a much more luxurious character, than the appearance of the house had led him to expect, whilst the papers scattered on the floor, and piled in labelled packets on the table, proved it to be as much used as an office for the transaction of business, as a place of abode.

Father Paul, in obedience to a sign from his host, took a chair from the middle of the room, and the little man having followed his example, opened the conversation by saying, that he presumed he need not inform his guest, after what had already passed, that he was an agent of the French Government.

The Hermit bowed, and replied, if such ~~were~~ the case, he was at a loss to guess for ~~what~~ purpose he could desire a private confere~~nce~~ with him.

"For one of infinite importance," said ~~the~~ Frenchman, who now placing his hat on ~~the~~ table, and throwing aside his cloak, displayed a keen, caustic visage, and a pair of sh~~arp~~ restless grey eyes, more calculated to exc~~ite~~ mistrust than confidence, even in one ~~less~~ skilled in human nature than Father Pa~~ul~~. "You are doubtless aware," he continu~~ed~~, "that the French army, after a series of sple~~nd~~id victories over the insolent rebels of Bern~~e~~, have cut the rabble to pieces, and planted th~~e~~ banner of their glorious Republic on the wal~~l~~ of that city. Prompted alone by their love ~~of~~ liberty, and their earnest desire for the un~~iversal~~ happiness of man, my countrymen en~~ter~~ed on this glorious campaign for th~~e~~ proclamation of freedom and equality, to all th~~e~~ oppressed nations of Europe. They felt thei~~r~~

own honour concerned in the welfare of this country, and are resolved, at whatever cost, to release its inhabitants from the trammels of their worn out confederacy, and make them partakers in the glory and happiness of regenerated France !”

“ I have heard that the coffers of France were empty ; those of Berne were full !” was the Hermit’s laconic reply.

“ It is but just that the conquered should pay the expenses of the war they provoked,” said the little man dogmatically, “ but to the purpose, Father Paul. We have reason to believe that you are acquainted with General Schauenburg’s intention to advance in a few days on Lucerne ?”

The Hermit bowed his silent assent.

“ You probably know, likewise,” continued the Frenchman, “ that we have secured numerous partizans amongst the most influential men of the city. Several members of the council, Michael Graaf amongst the number,

are entirely at our service, but we have ~~some~~ doubts whether the inhabitants of Schwytz, and the other Forest Cantons, will be ~~wise~~ enough to receive the new constitution ~~with~~ becoming gratitude."

"It is very doubtful, indeed," said Father Paul, with great gravity.

"I am obliged to you for this candid opinion," rejoined his companion. "We understand that your influence over these mountaineers is absolutely unbounded—that Albrecht Reding, who has recently been chosen Landshauptman of Schwytz, is your most intimate friend,—and that by your wisdom and advice, his actions are entirely guided. Such being the case, I need scarcely say, that our General set a very high value upon your co-operation."

The Hermit again bowed, but he answered not a word.

"They are most anxious to effect the regeneration of these Cantons without effusion of blood," proceeded the diplomatist, affec-

pausing and clearing his throat several times in vain expectation of reply, "and convinced that you Father Paul Styger, have power more than any other man, to aid their generous endeavours, by your extensive influence, I am commissioned to offer you, in the name of the French Directory, and their servants, Generals Brune and Schauenburg, whatever terms you require, in return for your friendship and assistance."

"Then tell these honourable gentlemen," said the Hermit, calmly arising, "there are some men who have no price, and Paul Styger is one of them. Tell them, moreover, that though in cities they may find traitors ready to barter their country to her enemies, that patriotism and the love of liberty are still the ruling passion of our mountaineers, and that step by step they will defend their fastnesses to the last drop of their blood against invaders, who, under the guise of amity, come to strip them of

the rights and privileges their ancestors won from tyranny in many a glorious conflict."

"But the generosity of my employers is unbounded," said the little man, who was fully persuaded that Father Paul only sought to enhance his value by this declamation, "as Herr Styger, as I said before, has only to name his own terms. He need be under no necessity for the future, of living in a cavern on the chance bounty of devotees, or wasting his valuable life in poverty and seclusion."

Unutterable scorn curled the lip of the Solitary as he listened to these words.

"You promise fairly" he said, when the words were concluded, "but there are things even on earth more precious than gold, or palaces, or costly raiment; and humble as I seem, I am richer than your haughty masters, for I have none of these. My wealth is beyond the control of destiny, and like the Prophet in the wilderness, the bounty I exist on is eternal."

"Then you reject my offers?" inquired the Frenchman, to whom the language of the Hermit conveyed no other idea.

"As I would the gifts of the Evil one!" exclaimed Father Paul, indignantly, "and if I have the power over the people for which you give me credit, instead of being abused to the base purposes of French intrigue, it shall, by Divine pleasure, be exerted to the very utmost, to foster in the breasts of my countrymen, a spirit of the most undying enmity against these avaricious and unprincipled invaders, and to excite them to prove to the nations of Europe, that the genius of our forefathers has not yet departed from the rude recesses of our mountains."

"You will have reason to repent these fanatical opinions," returned the diplomatist, with a sneer; "you had better content yourself with fasting and praying, instead of meddling with politics, and haranguing and deluding poor ignorant shepherds to their ruin."

"My actions will not be guided by the insolent dictation of a petty intriguer," replied the Hermit, turning to depart. "The day may not be far distant, when the shepherds you despise, may teach you and your unprincipled employers, that freemen can fight as bravely for their hearths and their land, as the hireling soldiers of an upstart Government."

"Ha! Sir! do you threaten?" cried the Frenchman, in a prodigious passion, but ere he could utter more, Father Paul had opened the door to depart, and Michael Graaf, to the equal surprise of both, stood at the same instant on the threshold.

The Hermit did not deign to address him, but casting on him one withering glance, strode haughtily away.

"Ha, Monsieur Arnold," cried the Treasurer, turning to the Frenchman, as soon as they were left alone, "what intrigue have you on foot with that incorrigible fanatic?"

"Fanatic, indeed, Herr Graaf!" returned

the angry diplomatist. "Having been told that he had great influence amongst the mountaineers, I thought it expedient to endeavour to convince him, that it was as much for their interest as his own, that they should allow us to make our arrangements throughout the country with tranquillity; but instead of expressing proper gratitude and respect for the great nation, he stormed and raved like a madman, about liberties, and ancestors, and Heaven knows what besides, insulting me and my gallant employers with the grossest abuse. Truly these fellows are as uncouth as the bears of Berne."

"And as savage too, if you do not muzzle them," said Michael, earnestly. "But surely, Monsieur Arnold, you did not tell him how soon the army is expected to march on Lucerne?"

"I believe I might give him some intimation, for my offers of reward were so unlimited,

that I had not the least anticipation he would refuse to join our party."

"I wish you had spoken to me first on this matter," said the Treasurer, with perplexity; "I know this fellow thoroughly, and depend upon it, you might as well have thrown a firebrand amongst the forests, as have allowed him to depart thither with this intelligence. If you leave him at liberty another day, to confer with his friend, Aloys Reding of Schwytz, the French will find a rifle behind every bush in the four Cantons."

"Ha! do you think so?"

"I am certain of it."

"Then, by Heaven, Herr Graaf, I must take prompt means to silence him, or I may find myself in an unpleasant predicament. Do you think he will return to the mountain to-night?"

"It is most probable," replied the Treasurer, "but that is easily ascertained, and I sincerely

rejoice that I came in time to put you on your guard. I must now communicate to you the arrangements I have made for the proper reception of the French army. The keys of the Treasury are, as you know, in my keeping, and they shall be immediately handed over to General Schauenburg. At my own risk, I have secured a large party of the lowest class in the French interest, by a little well-timed liberality; several of my brother magistrates have come over to my way of thinking, and in the course of the day I will point out to you the houses of others, whom it may be proper and necessary to arrest as speedily as possible. Some of our Council talked of bringing troops into the town, but that I have effectually prevented, so I hope every thing will go as quietly as we could desire."

"Your services are indeed truly valuable," returned the Frenchman, "and I have no doubt they will be duly estimated by those

who have more power to reward them than have."

Graaf smiled, so as effectually to conceal even from his shrewd companion, that trouble lay heavy at his heart, and during the examination of certain papers he had brought with him for the inspection of his employer, adroitly contrived more than once, to make such allusions to Father Paul, as sufficed to keep alive the Frenchman's apprehensions and wrath against the Hermit. Nor did these wily insinuations fail to produce the effect he desired, and certain other weighty points having been discussed and settled between the worthy coadjutors, they parted with mutual satisfaction to complete their allotted tasks.

By such insignificant tools as these does Providence see fit to direct the destinies of nations; and those vast changes in laws and government, which wisdom shrinks from hazarding, thus frequently spring from the

selfish passions of narrow-minded men, who, intent alone on their individual interest, are careless of the widely spreading consequences of their deeds, which like the circle around a stone cast heedlessly into the placid water, continue to disturb the tide of human life, long after they have sunk forgotten to the grave.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Think ye, that sic as you and I,
Wha drudge, and drive through wet, and dry,
 Wi’ never-ceasing toil,
Think ye, are we less blest than they,
Wha scarcely tent us in their way,
 As hardly, worth their while ?
Yet natures charms, the hills and woods,
The sweeping vales, and foaming floods,
 Ar free alike to all.”

BURNS.

THE night so full of accidents in Lucerne had been passed by poor Lena in her lonely Chalet, with more anxiety than she had experienced for many years. The wild language of Father Paul had first excited apprehensions of impending evil in her mind, and the prolonged absence of her son, gave her increased cause for alarm.

The sun arose and he came not; she drove

the cattle to the pastures, and there leaving them under the care of Fritz, she descended anxiously to her home; still Walther had not returned. She climbed to a point of rock that commanded a view of the path from the valley, for nearly a quarter of a league, but not a shadow was there to be seen, till weary of watching, she sought to forget her increasing fears, by busying herself in collecting the herbage for her cattle, that grew on wild places, where only her own feet, or those of the Chamois could have climbed.

But though she perpetually paused in her labour, to look if no one approached her Chalet, not a living creature ascended the mountain, till as the day began to wane, her impatience could no longer be controlled.

She took his evening meal to Fritz, and told him she was going in search of his brother, and might not return till night, but that he must drive the cattle home at the usual hour

whether she came back, or not. He made signs of obedience, though at the same time, he gave her to understand how gladly he would have been her companion; but his service could not be dispensed with, and the poor mother commending him to the care of heaven, left him most unwillingly, and with tears in her eyes, commenced her anxious way.

The first place whither she directed her steps was the Hospital—but there no tidings awaited her. The monks expressed great surprise that Walther had not come that morning as usual to his work, but they were as ignorant as herself of the cause of his absence. Father Paul hoped, might be able to give her more information, and to the Cavern of the Waterfall, she determined to ascend.

Many sad presentiments thronged on her mind, as she mounted the difficult path, and it now occurred to her, that it was very strange the Hermit himself had given her no tidings of her son, if, as she at first strove to persuade her-

self, he had been engaged in some secret mission, by this mysterious being.

But still Father Paul, during the summer months, so rarely descended from his cell, that **her** reliance on finding him there, and receiving tidings of Walther, made her little regard the steepness, or length of the way.

At last she heard the murmur of the waterfall—and then she distinguished the old man's rocky seat at the entrance of the cavern—but **she** likewise saw with dismay, that it was unoccupied. She hurried on—she passed forward into the cave. It was empty, and though she repeatedly called on Father Paul, echo alone answered to his name.

Now greatly alarmed, both for the Hermit and her son, she stood for a few moments bewildered and sorrowful, ere she decided what course to pursue. But after murmuring a short prayer, before the old man's crucifix, her spirit revived, and brushing away her tears, she she determined at once to set off to Lucerne,

and ascertain if Hans could give her any intelligence.

There was a short path over the summit of the mountain, usually traversed by the Hermits on his way to Weggis, and this though rugged and indeed impassable to those less accustomed to that wild district than herself, she chose to follow; for she felt there was a chance she might meet him there.

Yet it was a track she habitually avoided, for it led within a few paces of the spot, where her husband had perished; and her strong mind, ever rather strove to banish melancholy ideas, than to cherish them. But so deep was her anxiety for the fate of Walther, that she scarcely thought of the past, till she came close to the fatal crag, rising like a dark monument against the sky, and then the fatal agony of her bereavment, rushed like a present sorrow upon her mind, and hiding her face in her hands she stood still, and wept bitterly.

“Father Paul called me happy, yesterday,”

she thought at length, "and so I was—happy as on the morning when my poor husband departed from me for ever, without either of us dreaming of approaching sorrow. But the mists of the mountain are not so changeable as our hearts, or never could I have forgotten the anguish of that day. Yet I have forgotten it, and sunshine and summer have been pleasant to me since then, or I must have followed him to the grave long before now. But woe is me—grief follows us, like a cloud, and if any misfortune has befallen Walther, the end of my days will be darker than the beginning. But I must not tarry here! it behoves us all, as Father Paul says, to struggle for the future, and not grieve over the past."

With this resolution, she again continued her way, but very slow was her progress. The heavy rains of the preceding night, rendered the steep, narrow path, slippery and dangerous, and she was obliged to use the utmost caution,

in clambering over the masses of mossy rock, that frequently obstructed it.

The drops of a recent shower, still hung like gems on the tall grasses and quivering ferns when she reached the summit of the mountain, and the setting sun, like a ball of fire, burst broad and dazzling on her sight.

Seven Cantons with all their endless variety of hill, and vale, and lake, and woodland, lay in purple splendour at her feet, but she saw only the glorious orb of day, that bathed the clouds in radiance, and she had gazed at it, till her eyes were unable to distinguish other objects, when she was startled from her momentary reverie, by the sudden and unexpected report of a gun. It appeared to come from behind a broken bank only a few paces from the spot where she stood, and the echoes had scarcely caught the sound, when it was followed by heavy groans, and then a man rushed past her, with the speed of the wind.

In vain did she call on him ; he returned no answer, but bounding like a chamois from cliff to cliff, was lost in the shadows of the darkening valley, before her dazzled sight had recovered its usual power.

The sound of his flying footsteps had scarcely died away, when, from the spot where the gun had been fired, she heard the deep and fearful moaning of some one apparently in the last agony of expiring life.

She rushed forward—she darted round a projecting angle of the rugged acclivity, and in a narrow recess beyond, to her horror and amazement, the first object she beheld, was Father Paul, stretched bleeding and apparently lifeless on the ground. She called to him in a wild voice, but he answered her not ; she raised his head from the wet turf, but his eyes were closed ; the hue of death was on his face, his lips were distorted by pain, and it seemed, as if the last spark of life, had been exhausted in

those expressions of agony which had brought Lena to his side.

Ever prompt where there was a necessity for action, and hoping that the Hermit had only fainted from loss of blood, the shepherdess lost no time, but instantly tore off his frock and sought to ascertain the nature of his hurt. She soon discovered that a bullet, probably aimed at his heart, had passed through the upper part of his left arm, which had bled profusely, and tearing her apron into shreds, she quickly bound it up, so as to prevent further hemorrhage, should he again revive.

But this done, she was at a loss how next to proceed; there was no fountain near, from whence to bring him a reviving draft, and though the hospital of Our Lady of the Snows was directly beneath her, in the valley, it was too far off for its charitable inhabitants to hear her cries for assistance. She was strong, but yet not strong enough to bear the Hermit

thither, and willingly would she have given all she possessed to have had Walther at her side at that moment.

Whilst still undecided what course to pursue, she was greatly cheered by feeling the pulse of the old man gently throbbing beneath her fingers, and whilst she supported his head, and continued to watch him, with deep anxiety, she saw him slowly unclose his eyes, and gaze vacantly around him. By degrees his pulse varied stronger, and his consciousness returned, till at length recognizing his companion he heaved a short sigh, and feebly pressed her hand to his, as if to testify his gratitude. But Lena did not speak, she scarcely dared to breathe, for she heard the sound of footsteps on the hill, and though it was already too dark to distinguish any object at more than twenty paces distance, she was certain that some one was approaching, and trembled with the terrible apprehension, that it might be the assassin of Father Paul.

by hearing the cracked notes of her
Hans Brunk singing at the top of his
as if he sought by this attempt at a
keep up his own courage, and terrified
same time every enemy earthly or un-
who might feel inclined to assail him, and
did mellifluous notes from the lips of her
more welcome on the soul of an en-
youth, than did the shrill music of the
on the ear of the Shepherdess.

“Hans,” she eagerly exclaimed, “for
sake cease that noise, and come here im-
mediately.”

“Lena! is that your voice?” cried
man in a very altered tone.

“Yes foolish man, what are you of

"What mischief, in the name of the Saints? cannot I stir a step without going plump up to the neck at every turning in other people's troubles. What have we here? some drunken shepherd that has mistaken kirchen-Wasser for goat's whey?"

"Oh, Hans, it is a lucky chance brought you hither to help me," rejoined his sister, "for I could not have removed him alone."

"And do you think I am going to be such a fool, as to take that trouble," he said with a laugh; "no, no, leave him where he is, Lena, and he will sleep himself sober before morning."

"Leave him! heaven forbid! you know not what you are saying! it is Father Paul!"

"What the Hermit! truly I thought he had forsworn all strong potations."

"Hans, for shame!" cried Lena, now highly irritated. "This is no time for jesting; the holy man is at the point of death. He is wounded and bleeding, and we must carry him to the monastery without a moment's delay."

"Wounded do you say? has he fallen from a crag, or what has happened?"

"I scarcely can tell you," returned the woman in hurried accents. "A gun was fired, a man darted past me, and then I found Father Paul here, wounded and insensible."

"A gun say you," murmured Hans in extreme terror; "did you know the man?"

"He passed me very quickly, and my eyes were dazzled by the setting sun."

"Was it Michael Graaf?" demanded the tailor, in accents scarcely audible.

"Certainly not! he was taller, and thinner, and moved more nimbly, like a younger man," returned Lena; "but help me, Hans, to lift the Hermit from the ground, and we will talk of this hereafter."

"To the Hospital," whispered Father Paul.

"There is no house nearer, sure enough," said the little man, "and I am sure it is impossible that I, for one, can carry such a load all the way thither."

"For shame!" cried Lena sternly.

"Shame, indeed, what should I be ashamed of, the needle is my profession, and I glory in it; a trade that requires no strength like your milk pails, to guide it. I can't, and I won't break my back, for any man living or dead, and there is an end of it. Father Paul is like to bring me into troubles enough, and you too, without making that the finishing stroke."

"What is to be done then?" asked the shepherdess in the utmost distress.

"If you are not afraid of having your brains blown out, if you stay here," answered the tailor, "I will go down to the Hospital, and send up two stout friars with a letter and terms."

"Do so, with all speed," said Lena impatiently, "but first tell me if you know anything of Walther?"

"Oh, yes, plenty!" answered the tailor at the same time turning to depart.

"Is he safe?"

"Perfectly so!"

"But why has he not returned?"

"Father Paul can tell you all that better than I," said Hans, and without adding more, he hurried down the mountain.

It was true he had come thither purposely to visit Lena at her chalet, and recount to her the whole events of the preceding night, but he was not prepared to do so in the presence of the Hermit; not exactly knowing how much he might be willing for him to disclose. He thought it best, therefore, to defer the whole narrative to a more convenient opportunity, when he might be at liberty to say what he pleased, and to tell his story, moreover, in a manner to set his own conduct off to the best advantage.

Slowly and drearily passed the time whilst Lena remained in the darkness, on the brink of that vast mountain, with the head of Father Paul resting on her knee, and the chill night breeze sighing like a troubled spirit around

them. The old man neither moved nor spoke, for though his senses had returned, his weakness and exhaustion were extreme, and the feared lest succour might arrive too late to rescue him from death.

At length, to her inexpressible relief, she saw lights moving around the Hospital, and then came slowly and steadily from the valley, up the side of the mountain towards her. The well known voice of Hans ere long broke the deep stillness of the night, and before five minutes more had elapsed, he appeared with a torch in one hand, and a basket of provisions in the other, busily pointing out the resting place of the Hermit, to two of the Capuchins who followed him with a litter. These worthy monks were equally surprised and distressed by the situation of the Solitary, but having ascertained that his wound had ceased to bleed, and made him swallow a strong cordial, they immediately laid him on the litter, and commenced their descent to the Hospital. Leta and Hans, bear-

ing torches, led the way, and with the utmost caution and care, they reached the holy edifice in about half an hour.

Father Paul was there immediately laid in bed, and one of the monks, well skilled in surgery, forthwith examined the nature of his injuries. It was with infinite sorrow that Lena heard him at length pronounce, that in his present exhausted and feeble state, it was utterly impossible to probe his wounds, but that judging from external appearances they were very serious, whilst the Hermit's advanced age materially increased the danger arising from them.

The years of kindness that the Shepherdess had received from Father Paul, and the deep and respectful affection with which she consequently regarded him combined with several other causes to make her feel that his death would be the heaviest misfortune, except the loss of her children, that could possibly befall her, and her sorrow was greatly aggravated, when she found, that by the rules of the mo-

nastery, she could not be allowed to remain and watch over the sick bed of her benefactor. Though she knew that whilst under the care of the Capuchins, he had little need of her services, and that silence and rest were his best medicines, it was with a heavy and unwilling heart, that accompanied by Hans, she departed for her own house. Yet it was now many hours since she left it, and she remembered, not without anxiety, that poor Fritz was there alone.

The youth was in bed and asleep when his mother and uncle reached the chalet. The fire was not totally extinct, and Lena having revived it with fresh faggots, and placed a supper of bread and cheese before Hans, seated herself beside him, and with an anxious countenance told him he had now no further excuse for delaying to inform her of all he knew about Walther.

"If I had had any pleasant news to communicate, I would not have refused telling it you, as we came along," answered the tailor,

whilst he at the same time commenced a most hearty attack on the viands before him.

"He has not been doing anything wrong," will answer for him," said his sister keeping her anxious eyes fixed upon his countenance.

"I dare not say," replied Hans, "but nevertheless—upon my soul Lena you make the best cheese on the whole mountain."

"But what of Walther?"

"Ay, what of Walther! you may well say that, for though he has done nothing wrong, that I know of, except refusing to follow my trade, which would have saved him from all the troubles and difficulties he is now in—"

"Speak out at once, Hans, I entreat you," cried the poor woman, "can you not tell me plainly what has become of him?"

"Yes, to be sure, plainly enough, if you wish it. He is in the city goal."

"In goal," exclaimed Lena. "Holy Mother, for what reason?"

“ For robbing the public treasury !” returned **Hans**, with a knowing nod.

“ Brother, are you dreaming, or distracted !” cried the poor woman, in the wildest agitation.

“ Neither the one, nor the other,” he replied, **“ and moreover, what I tell you is as true as that hunger and fasting are ill companions.”**

“ But he is not—he cannot be guilty !” exclaimed the distracted mother.

“ You are right there,” returned the tailor, **“ but there are some who say he is, and will swear to it too, and as Michael Graaf is one of the number, and Staffer is another, you may be pretty sure there will be many more of those who pin their faith on rich men’s sleeves, who will be quite ready to believe it. Oh, Lena—Lena, in truth it is a bad business, or I would not have left a half finished pair of buckskins, to come clambering all the way here, to tell it you. He is a promising young man to say the least of him, though he did disdain the needle, and these rascals will be making him shorter by**

a head, before one well knows what they are about."

"Is Father Paul aware of what has happened?"

"To be sure he is," returned Hans; "it was all he who drew the poor boy into the scrape; and what is more, I am afraid there is nobody else can get him out of it; and here, as if on purpose to make matters worse, comes some rascally sharp-shooter, and sends a bullet through his body. I would bet my last new shears it was Michael Graaf, only I believe, that like myself, he is no hand with a rifle. But you saw the fellow, Lena?"

"Only imperfectly," she replied, "yet I could swear it was not the Treasurer. But tell me, Hans, how Walther got into all this trouble, and then I shall be a better judge what course to take to rescue him from his enemies."

The little man forthwith began a narrative of the circumstances that led to his nephew's captivity, which though true in the main, was so

distorted to make himself appear the most important person in the night's transactions, that those who knew the simple truth, would have had some difficulty in recognizing it, when thus disguised.

But Lena learnt enough from it, to know that her son was in imminent danger, and that Father Paul, from whom no assistance could be expected in his present state, was apparently the only creature who had power to assist him. Hans said he was willing at any risk to swear to all he knew, should the poor youth be brought to trial, but Lena was too well aware of his habit of saying more than he performed, to place much reliance on such aid; and even, if the tailor's affection for Walther should, at the time of need, inspire him with such unusual courage, she felt certain that his evidence would avail little, against the testimony of such influential men as Staffer, and Michael Graaf.

Hans, with all his vanity, admitted this, and they had at length concluded, that on the speedy recovery of Father Paul, the fate of Walther depended, when their sad discourse was unexpectedly interrupted, by a feeble tapping at the door. It was past midnight, and never before since Lena dwelt there, had any human being disturbed her at such an hour. Though naturally courageous, a feeling of alarm crept over her, when she remembered the recent attack on Father Paul, and when the signal was speedily repeated, she yet hesitated for a moment, ere she removed the slight wooden bar, by which alone the door was secured.

“ But perhaps it may be some fellow creature in distress,” she thought, “ and the wind and the rain are sweeping wildly over the hills. I cannot refuse them admission.”

Hans no sooner perceived her intention than he screamed loudly to her to desist, but she heeded him not. She thought she knew the

voice, that faintly pleaded for admission, and though she scarcely believed her senses, with anxious haste she flung open the door.

A female, whose fluttering garments were drenched with rain stood without, but hastily crossing the threshold, she no sooner came within the rays of the cottage fire, than Hans sprang from his seat with amazement, and Lena uttered a short cry of consternation.

It was Justine.

Weary and exhausted, it was some minutes before she could reply to their anxious inquiries as to the cause of her coming thither, at such an hour, and when after a few broken words, she burst into a violent fit of weeping, Lena sadly persuaded that Walther's misfortunes were the cause of her distress, endeavoured to soothe her with gentle kindness, and wisely forbore to question her further, till her excitement had somewhat subsided.

She busied herself meanwhile, in removing her wet linen cloak and shoes, and insisted on

the poor girl swallowing a glass of hot whey, before she would allow her to utter another syllable.

Hans, whose curiosity was meanwhile on the full stretch, thought all these arrangements would never come to an end, and after fidgetting backwards and forwards for more than five minutes, whilst his sister supported the head of the weeping girl on her bosom, he suddenly seized her by the arm, and cried in a sharp voice, "Lena, are you mad, not to let the girl speak? Nothing but Walther's danger has sent her here, and she has some worse tidings, depend upon it, than I brought you, or she would not have come scrambling up the mountain alone, at this hour, when the winds are howling enough to frighten a stout man out of his five senses."

"Oh yes, yes, terrible tidings indeed," murmured Justine.

"Ay, did I not tell you so!" cried Hans, with infinite exultation. "Well, my child,

what are they? don't mind Lena, but speak out."

But Lena was no longer in a state to offer any opposition. Her own terrors had almost deprived her of the power to support her guest, and trembling from head to foot, a terrible presentiment came over her, that the life of Walther had already been sacrificed to the bitter jealousy of Staffer, and the guilty terrors of Michael Graaf, and when Justine continued silent, she shuddered to hear Hans inquire, in a troubled voice, if the rascals had already put the poor boy to death.

"No, no—not yet, or I had not been here," replied the girl eagerly.

"Then what, in the name of fortune, Mademoiselle Justine," said the tailor, "has made you thus set your uncle at defiance, and redouble his wrath against the poor youth, by your deserting his house in this manner?"

"I have locked my door, and no one suspects I am from home," she replied, "but I could

not go to rest, when I knew that to-morrow it is their purpose—”

“To bring him to trial!” exclaimed Lena, when the poor girl’s faltering words died away, and hiding her face, she again wept bitterly.

“Oh, no! no!” she cried, “would it were. It is worse, far worse. He is to be put to the torture.”

“They cannot be such monsters!” exclaimed Lena.

“They have the power, for it was done not long ago, when a fellow was arrested on suspicion of murder,” said Hans, quietly. “But on what pretence can they use Walther so barbarously?”

“It appears, when the other members of the Council went to examine the state of the Treasury with my uncle,” said Justine, “large sums were discovered to be missing. Certain insinuations were thrown out against Father Paul, and it was proposed to question Walther. He was resolutely silent, and provided he makes

no confession before to-morrow, they intend wringing the truth from his lips, by this horrible expedient. One Magistrate alone objects to it, but my uncle exultingly told me, his efforts to avert it will avail nothing. I went first to you Hans—but when I found you not, there was no course left for me, but to come in search of Lena.”

“And what is next to be done I know not!” returned the distracted mother.

“Get him out of prison this very night,” said Justine, “and either conceal him, or send him from the country, till better men are in power.”

“And when will that be?” returned Hans.

“Heaven only knows!” exclaimed the girl, “nor does it matter, but Walther must be saved.”

“It is fine talking, but words shape no garments,” returned the tailor; “the way to do it, is the difficulty.”

"I have thought of that too," returned Justine, whom rest had now quite revived. "Sanchen the goaler's daughter, has been my playfellow and friend for years. She knows all my trouble, and has promised, if I will only have a boat on the lake before sunrise, she will help me, to the utmost of her power, to get Walther out of prison."

"And your uncle?" demanded the shepherdess.

"I cannot think of my uncle when Walther is in danger. Don't chide me Lena, it may be wrong, but I cannot help it. If I can return to my chamber unobserved I will; but if I cannot, the world may say what it pleases, and if I succeed, and Walther is saved, I shall be far too happy to care for it."

"Noble, generous girl, you are worthy of his love," said Lena, taking the girl's hands in hers, and kissing her fervently. "I would Father Paul had been able to advise us, but we will do the best we can."

"And why cannot the Hermit advise us?" inquired Justine anxiously.

"He was shot this very night by an unknown hand on the mountain, and now lies in great danger at the Hospital," returned Lena.

The maiden listened with horror and agitation to this information, and she sat for several minutes in deep and sorrowful silence, ere, in reply to Lena's inquiry, she detailed the further particulars of the plan she had arranged with her friend Sanchen, for her lover's escape.

But as all chance of success depended on it being accomplished before daylight, it was evident they must depart without further delay, and Justine declared she had entirely recovered from her fatigue. The shower had past, and the moon was once more shining brightly, but though Lena's anxiety for Walther was very great, it was with painful reluctance that she thought of again deserting her poor dumb, helpless Fritz for so long a time. But endea-

vouring to convince herself that no harm could possibly happen to him in that secluded place she kissed him as he slept, and brushing the unbidden tears from her eyes, she hastily followed her companions from the cottage. It was only a momentary weakness, for convincing how greatly her assistance was required, and how cruel it would be to desert Justine at such a crisis, with no better guide and adviser than Hans, whom she knew, by a long and sad experience, to be the slave of self-interest and conceit, she would willingly have made a sacrifice to secure the escape of Walther from the power of his enemies, and sustain the generous hearted maiden in the arduous task she had undertaken.

CHAPTER V.

"Thy heart can feel—but will not move
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.
And these, when all was lost beside,
Were found and still are fixed, in thee—
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert—even to me."

BYRON.

THOUGH Lena's anxiety for Walther was great as she descended the mountain that night, it was far exceeded by the deep agony of Justine's troubled heart. The mother had before known heavy trials, and age had perhaps somewhat blunted the acuteness of her early feelings, but the maiden had previously experienced little of sorrow; far less of human depravity, and nothing of the cruelty of hardened hearts.

her only cause for anguish, it would
a fearful shock to her young and innocent
but that Walther Stanz was to be the
such crafty iniquity, whilst it redoubled
agony, aroused all the strength of her
spirit, and determined her to use every
in her power to foil the unjust plot of the
Treasurer.

Gradually as they approached the lake,
boat procured by Hans at Weggis, she
became elated by the certainty of her
the joyful consciousness that it was
power, to prove to the chosen of heaven
far beyond all the world beside, she
safety, and his love.

It is very rarely in this world, that

- - - - -

and so seldom can she act up to their high dictates, in a cool and calculating world, without bringing either destruction, or ridicule on her head. But the whole soul of this single hearted creature, was too entirely devoted to the man she loved, to allow her to fear any such consequences for herself, and moreover if she did then set at defiance the authority of all that was mean, and base, and contemptible, her conscience told her she did right, and relying on the protection of heaven, and Walther's approbation, she fearlessly followed the impulse of her pure and generous heart.

Lena who well knew that prudence as well as enthusiasm, is at all times necessary to ensure success, watched the countenance of the excited girl with sorrowful apprehensions, and it was with increased anxiety, she learnt on arriving at Lucerne, that Justine alone could be admitted into the prison.

But she insisted on accompanying her as long as possible, and having left Hans in the

pointed to meet her friend. It was
part of the town, and not a creature
but themselves, yet they spoke i
as they glided through the deserted

"Justine," said the shepherdess
had been a long silence between t
are very young, and Sanchen is y
surely you had better let me go into
instead of you."

"Do not mistrust me, Lena," re
girl, "more than my life is at stake,
you have known me only giddy and
I have gained ten years wisdom since
last."

"It is only three days since,
anxious mother with a deep sigh.

"Do not mistrust me, Lena," re

"It is Sanchen, kind girl," murmured Justine, and in another minute her friend glided softly towards them, and whispered her name.

"Yes, I am here," she replied.

"Does all go well?"

"So far every thing prospers," answered her friend, "my father, after drinking freely, has gone to sleep at last; I have managed to get possession of his keys, and if you have a boat ready, will let the prisoner out by the little postern that opens from the north turret on the Lake."

"Hans Brunk is waiting at the landing place with a boat," answered Justine quickly.

"Then you must go back, and make him row round to the door, whilst I return to release the prisoner."

"Oh, Sanchen, I thought you promised to take me with you to his cell," returned Justine anxiously.

"There is no necessity whatever for your

venturing within the prison," was her friend's reply. "and the boat—"

"I will go back and send the boat, if that is all," said Lena; "I think Justine had better go with you to my son Walther, if it be possible for her to do so without awakening suspicion."

"Then be it so," was Sanchen's reply, "and make all speed, for in five minutes I hope we shall be at the postern."

The Shepherdess anxious and agitated, pressed Justine for a moment in her arms before they parted, and then in profound silence they each hurried on their way, Lena in search of Hans, and Justine, with her young friend, to the private entrance of the goaler's dwelling.

"Tread lightly," said Sanchen, in a whisper, when they approached the threshold of her home. "we must cross the kitchen where my father sleeps; and in fact, no sooner had these young creatures unclosed the door, and softly

entered the low and thick walled apartment, than Justine was fully convinced of the necessity for the utmost caution.

A deal table stood near the middle of the floor, and there with his head resting on his folded arms, sat the gaoler, snoring so loudly, as to leave no doubt of the reality of his slumber; but though Sanchen moved with the agility of a squirrel, as she lighted a lamp at the solitary candle burning near her father's elbow, he more than once groaned, as if uneasy in his sleep, ere she had accomplished it.

She made a sign to Justine to stand behind him near the door leading into the prison, and it was fortunate that she instantly obeyed her, for she had scarcely glided round, ere the man looked up in his daughter's face with a drowsy bewildered stare, and gruffly asked what she was about.

"I am going to bed father," she returned.

"Then be off with you," he said, "and don't stay chattering here, to disturb me half the

minutes snored louder than ever.

Sanchen, who though she had ve
much for her friend, was far from co
saw that not a moment was to be los
trembled so violently, that she vainly s
to turn the key in the lock of the in
but Justine, from whom the high e
of the moment, and the conscious
Walther's fate depended on her exert
banished all fear and hesitation, calmly
the fastenings, and having once more a
that their movements remained un
hurried after her companion into th
passage leading from the kitchen.
would they have secured the door in t
but there were no means of doing so,

intricate windings of the dreary old building, gave her friend a sign to proceed in silence, as they passed a line of iron clenched doors in the rough damp walls, and ascended a narrow flight of steep stone stairs. From thence they proceeded along a low vaulted gallery, and the heart of Justine beat wildly, when on reaching the termination of it, her guide whispered that they were near the cell of the prisoner. Turning aside into a small damp recess, she then placed her lamp on the ground, and pointing to an oaken door, asked her companion to assist her in withdrawing the bolts, for Walther was within. Justine instantly obeyed, though her heart was too full for words, and no sooner were the fastenings removed, than snatching up the lamp, she rushed into the cell.

Walther, disturbed by the unwonted noise at such an hour, had arisen from his miserable bed ere she entered, but bewildered and amazed, he scarcely dared to believe his senses,

when his dazzled eyes first discerned the form of her who bore the light.

“Walther!” she murmured, “do you know me?”

“Justine!” cried the youth, starting forward. “in the name of mercy, what has brought you hither?”

“Ask me no questions, but follow me,” was her reply; and she took him eagerly by the hand, as if to lead him from the cell.

“What does this mean? whither would you conduct me?” demanded Walther.

“To liberty!” she returned. “Hans and your mother wait with a boat on the Lake, and we must fly Walther! quick—quick—or all will be in vain.”

“Justine,” he said, gazing sadly and sorrowfully on the anxious face of the girl, “I cannot like a guilty coward shrink from justice, and give my enemies a right to brand my name for ever with dishonour.”

"They know your innocence, and their words will signify nothing, when you are safe and far away," she eagerly replied.

"For worlds would I not involve you in my troubles," said the youth, with extreme agitation. "A beggar, and a fugitive, I could no longer claim your love!"

"What is life worth, if we are to be parted for ever, Walther?" murmured Justine, in an imploring voice, as she clung to her lover.

"Ruin must be your portion, were you to join your fate to mine," he returned, "and I cannot selfishly sacrifice your welfare to my own gratification, or allow you to be deprived of home, friends, and wealth, to follow the wretched fortunes of a defamed and proscribed bond-man!"

"Oh, Walther, without you I have none of these—I have nothing on earth but your love," answered the girl in broken accents, whilst tears almost choked her utterance.

"My poor Justine! ours is a cruel fate,"

charges that Michael must have been
me."

"But to die on a scaffold! to die
mon robber, Walther!" cried the
clasping her hands, and gazing on
with distracting anguish, "to see
you have known from childhood a
round and mocking at your agony!
headsman's hands upon your throat

"No, no! Justine, this will
exclaimed the youth, hastily interru
whilst a slight shudder shook his pow

"If you knew my uncle as we
you would feel that nothing could a
your flight," she returned. "To-m
to-morrow—you doubtless know th

“Centuries make no alteration in bad men’s hearts,” she returned. “The monsters are in earnest, and all is prepared ; but oh, Walther, if you have no mercy on yourself, have pity on me, and fly.”

“Thank heaven my frame is strong,” said the young man calmly, “I have no fear of being forced to calumniate the innocent, and when the day of trial comes, Father Paul will not leave me to perish. His evidence alone—”

“Alas ! he can give no evidence.”

“What mean you ?”

“He has been wounded by an unknown hand, and now lies at the point of death, at the Hospital of Our Lady of the Snows.”

“Then Heaven has indeed deserted me !” exclaimed Walther, in a voice of despair.

“Oh, say not so !” cried his agitated companion, “the doors of your prison are unlocked, and Lena is waiting for you on the Lake.”

“Lena, said you ?” he vacantly replied, “my poor mother—and you my precious trea-

“ Oh come, then come ! you c
no longer,” cried Justine, “ and o
the mountains, we shall be as h
birds upon a summer’s day.”

“ But you must get there fir
Jezebel !” said a voice that made
and the prisoner turn with a st
and amazement towards the door
with breathless consternation, th
they beheld was Michael Graaf.

The gaoler stood behind him w
lamp in his hand, whose feeble
ghastly the pallid face of the T
dry thin hair, was unkempt and
and the dark roqueleur he had wra
him, did not conceal the ravages :

Walther should be subjected to the torture, he shrunk from carrying so barbarous a purpose into execution, and came to the prison that night to endeavour by mingled promises and threats, to persuade the young mountaineer to bring such accusations against Father Paul, as would cast the odium of his own crimes on the Hermit, of whose death the French agent had confidently assured him. Such a voluntary confession from the prisoner would of course, render the application of the torture unnecessary, and he fully calculated that in Walther's present position, by the promise of such an exemption, and other means in his power, he should be able to induce the prisoner to act entirely as he thought fit. He could not conceive any man to be actuated by nobler motives than himself, and this moral failing, notwithstanding his acute intellect, had more than once proved fatal to his best concerted plans.

Though startled and at first irritated at finding Justine in the prison, yet before the young

might be turned, and acted accordi

“ Ah, ha, my pretty niece,” he
ing, and taking the trembling girl
“ so I have caught you at last. Is
you cheat your old uncle, and whe
you safe and snug in your chambl
bling after young lovers, and devi
to avert justice, and impede the exe
laws? pretty doings! but I must
after you for the future, that is all
gaoler, how do you account for th
there must be other people to bla
as my niece?”

“ Truly,” said the man rubbi
shaggy hair, “ I knew nothing of
Somebody must have taken my k

"Positive," returned the gaoler. "There was no one below, as you saw plain enough, and not a creature was stirring as we came up here."

Justine at this instant caught a glimpse of her friend's figure, darting quickly past the door, and convinced she would have no difficulty in gaining her own room without detection, one cause for anxiety was removed from her mind.

"Well, well, I know nothing of all this," said Graaf, "only the matter must be enquired into, that is plain; and if the city authorities, who are not very lenient in these affairs, think proper to supersede you, Herr Blumer, I can say nothing against it."

"Surely Herr Graaf," returned the man knocking his shoulder against the Treasurer's, with a knowing wink, "one good turn deserves another. Who let you in here, to-night, eh Herr Michael?"

"Well, well," said the Treasurer, "I am not malicious, and if you can be silent, so can I,

that's all, but I want to speak to your prisoner without witnesses, so take charge of this niece of mine, till I am ready to return home and leave us for a few minutes alone together.

"Ay truly, Herr Graaf," he replied, "I have no reason to say that I am not always ready to do your pleasure. So mademoiselle Justine, you will be so good as to come downstairs with me directly."

"Uncle," said the girl, sinking at his feet, "I will do whatever you please, if you will only promise to rescue Walther from injustice."

"Go child, go," he returned, raising her from the ground, "it all depends upon himself, but if young people are so conceited that they will only be served in their own way, it is surely their fault of mine. I tell you, I have something to say to him, and you must leave us."

Thus commanded, Justine made no resistance, and with a sad despairing heart left the cell she had entered with such joyful anticipations.

Walther spoke not, but he felt as she disappeared, that they should meet no more on earth, and lost in thought, took little heed of Michael Graaf, till the Treasurer, having seated himself on the side of the wretched bed, desired him to do the same, as he wished to discourse with him on matters of consequence.

“Walther Stanz,” he resumed, when he found the young man still persisted in standing with his arms folded on his breast, “I know you consider me your enemy, but you are mistaken, you have judged rashly. It is true I refused you my niece, but I wished to see her married to a richer man, and that was only natural, for her beauty ought to make her fortune — that is the fact; but I bore you no enmity, because, like others of your age, you said she was a pretty girl; you were not to blame for that, but when you enticed her abroad at midnight, you must admit I had reason to be displeased. However, fate punished you more severely that night than I could

“On the contrary, Herr Graaf,” the prisoner calmly, “I consider it plain in my power.”

“Yet I am at large, and you in gaol,” said the citizen with a sarcastic smile. “This may be very fine talking, but it is out of place, and I tell you candidly, silence in a man in your situation, is little less than a sign of madness. I am anxious to befriend you, but unless you change your tone, that is impossible.”

“I speak the truth ! I know not what you would have me say,” returned Walther.

“But when a man’s neck is in danger, it is not always necessary he should speak the truth,” replied the Treasurer in a low voice.

tempt might only make his own case the more desperate ! you for instance, Walther Stanz—swear if you please that you saw me coming from the treasury at midnight, with a bag of gold under my arm ; well ; I deny it, and no man believes a syllable you say. Perhaps the scales of justice, do not hang even in our city ; no matter ; but so it is. Staffer on the contrary, found coin in your purse ; I swear it was the public gold—what follows ?”

“ Father Paul will declare he gave it me, and no man will presume to dispute his testimony.”

“ He dare not ! and what is more he cannot,” returned the Treasurer with a bitter smile.

“ He is dead.”

“ Dead !” echoed his dismayed listener.

“ Ay dead ! so now you see your case more clearly, and I candidly tell you that feeling compassion for your youth, and being moved by Justine’s tears, I have come hither to give you some hints, by which you may not only

escape the torture, but the death which otherwise would most certainly await you."

"If by any honest means, my reputation might be cleared," returned Walther in a troubled voice—

"By honest means to be sure," cried the Treasurer, interrupting him, "you do not suppose young man, that I would propose to you any other. Listen to me. You say Father Paul gave you that gold? swear it! Swear that you saw the Hermit that night in the market-place—that you met there—and that he then gave you the gold. Leave the rest to me and you are safe. Father Paul is dead, and no accusation can now injure him."

Walther's heart beat high with indignation as he listened to this insidious proposition, but he felt that upbraidings, or expostulations would profit nothing, and mastering his anger, only replied by an inquiry whether the Treasurer was quite certain that Father Paul was dead.

"Positive!" he answered, and anxious to conciliate the confidence of his companion he added, "it appears he has been meddling in public affairs, in a way displeasing to the French; in fact, priests have no concern with politics, and he has met with his proper reward for preaching the sword, instead of peace. He was an old acquaintance of mine, and I would I had seen him before he died, for there was a matter I would fain have questioned him about. You knew more of this strange man, than many on the mountain, Walther Stanz. Do you believe that he always dwelt alone? Was there no woman, ever said to have come with him from Italy?"

"I never heard such a tale."

"Was there no child, ever seen in his cavern? did you never hear such a thing reported, for I speak not of the present time, but of his first residence on the Righi. Mark me young man, do not question you thus, from idle curiosity, but there are feelings and interests depend upon

your answers, of deep and vital import. Do not say anything rashly. You have been the Hermit's pupil I am told. Did he never speak to you of a woman in whom he once took deep interest, or disclose to you, that she had borne a child, had you ever any reason to suspect that it had been left to his care? By heaven if you will tell me this, or discover to me its present abode, gold, honours, nay Justine herself, shall be yours from the present moment."

"And if Father Paul had confided in me, I should be unworthy of all the gifts you could heap upon me, if I purchased them by the betrayal of the trust he had reposed in me, returned the prisoner indignantly. "You think you know mankind, but you have yet looked only on its darkest side, and you have to learn, if you are not incapable of the knowledge, that though you may never have experienced gratitude—may never have deserved it, there are hearts on earth that would sooner break than prove false to its dictates—that

there are hearts to which virtue is more precious **than** gold, and to which even love would be **worthless** were it purchased at the price of **dis-**
honour. Yes, Michael Graaf, you are a great **man** in this city, no doubt, you are a counsel-
lor and Treasurer of Lucerne; you are rich, **your** word is a law to all men in authority, and
above all, you are Justine Weber's uncle, whilst **I,** on the contrary, am a beggar, a bondman,
and a prisoner, whom slander has defamed, and **in-**
justice foredoomed to the scaffold—yet, Mi-
chael Graaf, I would not, for the wealth of
both the Indies, change places with you for
one minute.”

“I did not ask you the question,” returned
the Treasurer with a calmness that made Wal-
ther regard him with amazement, but Graaf was
too intent on the purpose he had in view to take
heed of what he regarded as the idle passion of
an irritated boy. “I questioned you about a
child, Walther Stanz. Surely neither honour,

seek to blast the character of Father such dark tales, find others for your be assured that his secrets are as i in my keeping, as if they were bur grave."

"Then you do know the story- heard of a child? perhaps you hav when you too were a boy? by all thi I swear, that my gratitude should be if you would tell me where I may di cried Graaf, with a wild energy tha contrasted with his former caustic t and before the young man was aw purpose with trembling eagerness h his hand, and continued in hurrie "Walther Stanz, you know not the r

revenge, it is not to dishonour Father Paul that I ask you to disclose to me this secret. It is to rescue the innocent—to do tardy justice—it is to restore a child to the arms of a distracted and broken hearted father !”

“Herr Graaf,” said Walther solemnly, “you knew Father Paul, you say, for many years; wherefore, if this matter is of such vital moment, did you never question him, but wait till death has closed his lips for ever, to humble yourself to unbecomingly to one whom you have hitherto treated only with scorn ?”

“I would cringe to the dust, before the most abject beggar in the street, would he tell me where to find that child,” returned Michael; “and you know all, Walther, yet will not answer me. By every saint, I swear you should be free this instant, if you would give me the slightest hint to guide me in my search.”

“These offers are in vain,” returned the young man, whose amazement every moment

increased, "and I tell you once for all, Herr Graaf, that were you to tarry here till the morning, I have nothing to reveal."

"I did not think that one so young could have so hard a heart," said the Treasurer slowly drawing back, "but think again! I have offered you all the heart of man can crave, even the maiden you pretend to love, and the sole return I ask, is a few simple words that would injure no man living; yet you deny me—scorn me—set me at nought; but it is not yet too late; I am willing to pardon your reluctance, and repeat the proffers I have made."

"And I reject them all, and would, though they were ten times multiplied when linked with such conditions," returned the mountaineer as tranquilly as before.

"Villain, you shall yet repent this insolence," cried Michael turning yet paler with rage, when he found himself thus unexpectedly foiled, by one whom he had calculated on bending like a reed to his pleasure. "I have humbled myself

before you, but I will not submit to be defied with impunity ; and remember, when I have left this cell, every influence I possess shall be exerted to the uttermost, to revenge the insults you have offered me. Make your choice, for the last time, between my favour and an ignominious death."

" You already know my decision," was Walther's calm reply.

" Then, by the Saints ! your life shall pay the forfeit," returned the Treasurer in a deep, low, stern voice.

" That remains to be decided when we meet in the hall of justice," answered the prisoner with calm solemnity.

" We shall see each other ere then in the hall of torture," returned Graaf with a sardonic laugh, and without uttering another syllable, he left the cell, and having secured the door with many a bolt and bar, descended in search of Justine.

In silence he conducted her to his home.

following their interview in the prison, that a majority of the councillors, with Herr Wendel at their head, had decidedly refused their consent to the use of the torture. It was a cruel privilege they said, but rarely exerted, and at a time when foreign invaders were endeavouring by every means to cast an odium over the ancient confederacy, and the existing laws of the Forest Cantons, it would be affording them but too just a pretext for that subversion of the established government they endeavoured to clothe under the name of Justice, were the magistrates to be guilty of such a barbarous stretch of authority, especially on an occasion, which, at any period, would scarcely have warranted its exercise.

But Graaf durst not betray his dissatisfaction. He felt that though no positive and open charges had been made against him, suspicions were excited amongst many of his fellow citizens greatly to his disadvantage, and he was conscious notwithstanding his conviction of

CHAPTER VI.

I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.

SHAKESPEARE. MACBETH.

But thou dost swear only to be forsworn.

SHAKESPEARE. KING JOHN.

We are ever more irritated by our own faults than by those of others, and the dislike previously felt by Michael Graaf for Walther Stanz was deepened into positive enmity by the consciousness of having needlessly betrayed to him the secret weakness of his soul. He no longer shrunk from bringing him either to torture, or to death, and it was with a feeling of deeper disappointment, that he learnt on the day

following their interview in the prison, that a majority of the councillors, with Herr Wendel at their head, had decidedly refused their consent to the use of the torture. It was a cruel privilege they said, but rarely exerted, and at a time when foreign invaders were endeavouring by every means to cast an odium over the ancient confederacy, and the existing laws of the Forest Cantons, it would be affording them but too just a pretext for that subversion of the established government they endeavoured to clothe under the name of Justice, were the magistrates to be guilty of such a barbarous stretch of authority, especially on an occasion, which, at any period, would scarcely have warranted its exercise.

But Graaf durst not betray his dissatisfaction. He felt that though no positive and open charges had been made against him, suspicions were excited amongst many of his fellow citizens greatly to his disadvantage, and he was conscious notwithstanding his conviction of

the death of Father Paul, that his position was one of extreme danger and difficulty, from which the speedy arrival of the French army offered his only certain means of extrication.

All his endeavours were directed to postpone the trial of the prisoner till the enemy was in possession of the city, when he felt certain of being able to direct the decision of the judges at his pleasure. But there were others not less aware of the approach of the invaders than himself; men who, detesting his crooked policy, were determined, as far as they possessed the power, to circumvent it.

Their proceedings were conducted with so much secrecy and caution, that he was utterly astounded when, three days before the time he expected, he received a notice to attend in the town hall, in his place as one of the city magistrates, who were to sit as judges on the trial of Walther Stanz.

Though convinced that, by the death of Father Paul, all important evidence against

with agony from the prospect of being charged with perjury and robbery, he exulted in the thought that death was the reward of his accuser. Of that the slightest doubt ; the veracity of his associates could not be impeached. Whatever might be the reports to his captors, he consoled himself by the reflection that they would never reach the ears of his patrons, the French.

It was a fine bright April morning when he turned his steps towards the town. The streets were unusually crowded, and many of the people were hastening in the same direction for in a place where few events occurred to enliven the monotonous

for some time previously begun to agitate the public mind, and with the story of the robbery there were mingled indistinct rumours of treason and political intrigues, and wild accounts of the assassination of Father Paul, that greatly deepened the intensity of private feeling. Many were aware they were on the brink of a revolution, but they knew not wherefore, as if the fortunes of Walther Stanz were involved with those of the little republic.

Michael Graaf was questioned by numbers as he passed along, both as to the crime of the prisoner and probable conduct of the French; but though persuaded that by his own intrigues the fate of both would speedily be decided, his only answer was a portentous shake of the head, which all men were at liberty to interpret at their pleasure.

The place of trial was an old stone hall of the fourteenth century, with vaulted roof and painted windows. At the upper end, on a platform elevated about a foot above the much-

worn pavement, were placed around a table the chairs of the fourteen magistrates. Only one was vacant when Michael Graaf made his way through the crowd that already filled the body of the vast apartment to his seat of office.

A confused murmur like the buzzing of an angry hive arose, when he was recognized by the assembled people ; but he relied too entirely on the effects of the bribes he had been laboriously distributing for several days through every class, to imagine that the epithets "traitor," and "robber," which were occasionally to be distinguished amidst the sullen and inarticulate murmur, bore any application to himself, particularly when he saw his own agent Hans, the tailor, amongst the foremost of the mob.

It was singular that though he knew the affairs of most men with whom he had any dealings, he was ignorant that this fellow was Walther's uncle. The remote dwelling of Lena, and the rarity of the young man's visits to Lucerne, in some measure accounted for it,

and, ~~even~~ fact, Hans, from his selfish habits, appeared to stand so entirely alone, that few of his ~~neighbour~~ neighbours remembered his widowed sister or ~~her~~ sons.

When the Treasurer, after taking his accustomed place, first looked up from the ground, he was startled to find that the gaze of the President of the council was fixed with searching intensity upon him. For an instant he endeavoured to meet it steadily, but his nerves failed him, and his eyes sunk beneath it. He took up a pen—he cleared his throat—he glanced with restless uneasiness towards a second of his associates. He, too, was attentively surveying him. At a third, at a fourth, a fifth,—every glance was fixed upon his countenance, and when he at length met the scornful looks of Herr Wendel his hand trembled, his lips, white as a corpse, were slightly convulsed, and he would gladly have sunk into the earth to escape the withering scrutiny of the honest magistrate.

He was deeply mortified by this unusual reception ; it stung him to the very soul ; but after a moment's reflection he consoled himself with the idea that his suspected politics had produced the change, and he exulted in the conviction that he should be amply indemnified for this temporary mortification, by the influence and popularity he should speedily enjoy under the new government of the invaders.

"They may be mighty proud of their honesty," he thought, "but tomorrow they will find to their cost that it is not always the best policy ; and let them suspect what they please, before the week is past I shall have them, honest men, imploring most humbly for my interest, to keep the enemy's fingers out of their honest gains. Ay, ay, the wind will sit in another quarter then I warrant, and I shall be a match for them yet."

The current of the Treasurer's thoughts was at this moment interrupted by a slight commotion amongst the crowd, occasioned by the

entrance of Walther Stanz, who between two officers of justice was led from the further end of the hall towards the platform of the magistrates.

A deep silence followed the murmur with which the prisoner was first saluted, whilst the judges and the audience alike turned with eager curiosity to survey him.

The young mountaineer was known to very few in that numerous assembly ; but even those who beheld him for the first time, instantaneously felt a strong prepossession in his favour, and an involuntary conviction of his innocence, as they regarded the ingenuous expression of his handsome and noble features, and the free and fearless, yet respectful air, with which he took his place before his judges.

Even Michael Graaf, who by every effort of his perverted reason had wrought himself to detest the man whom he had so deeply injured, felt a movement of compunction when he ventured for a moment to rest his wandering eye

on his victim, who in all the freshness, ^{and} purity, and vigour of youth, stood calmly awaiting his doom.

The face of Walther Stanz, though somewhat paler than when his path was on the mountain, was neither anxious nor depressed, yet its whole expression was completely altered. During the vicissitudes of the past week, his mind had sprung from youth to manhood, and his countenance bore the impress of the change. He was no longer dreaming of action, but acting; and for the first time in his life all the strength of his powerful mind was called forth to contend with his subtle enemy, and avert, if possible, the dangers of his perilous position. He believed he had nothing to oppose to the malignant cunning of Michael Graaf but his own firmness and presence of mind; and the very sense that he stood alone, inspired him with an elevation of thought and strength of purpose such as he had never felt till then. He was innocent, and he feared no living man.

He was poor, and persecuted, and defamed; but he was resolved that however others might heap dishonour on his head, he would not be false to himself.

He was convinced that the evidence of Justine would not avail to procure his acquittal, were it proved by Michael Graaf that the coin found in his possession had been stolen from the treasury; and as he looked around on the unknown throng, he rejoiced that she was in her uncle's power, and was thus, even against her will, saved from the deep humiliation of revealing to that motly assembly the secret of their love-meeting.

It was that he had dreaded in his lonely captivity more than his own punishment. Even in that hour of peril he thought more of Justine than of himself; and it was a consolation to him amidst all his trouble, to feel that the sacred veil of mystery would not be torn from their love. During the past night this had been his most earnest prayer, and he

trusted it was granted when he saw his mother standing alone with Hans in the front of the throng.

The anxious and troubled gaze of poor Lena greatly distressed him, for it needed no words to convince him how much she had suffered on his account. All the sorrow that awaited her, should he that day be doomed to die, at once rushed on his mind ;— his mother's unwearied love—his mountain home—his boyish years— flashed past him like a vision ; and fearful lest his firmness should give way, he hastily averted his eyes, and kept them fixed upon the ground till the chief magistrate opened the proceedings of the day, by calling on him to answer to his name, and the charges of robbery that had been brought against him.

In a firm, respectful voice he replied by a protestation of his innocence, and an inquiry as to the proofs that had been adduced of his guilt.

His clear sweet voice confirmed the favour-

able impression his appearance had already made on the assembly; and when Michael Graaf arose to give his testimony, he was greeted by a murmur of very evil augury. But he was not thus to be confused. He had had full time to collect his faculties, and conquer any unbidden movement of compassion. His narrative was concise and clear. He merely said, that having been detained by the storm, he was returning home at an unusually late hour, when, to his amazement, he saw a man come forth from the side door of the treasury tower; that, suspecting villany, he had pursued and endeavoured to arrest this person, who proved to be the prisoner, Walther Stanz; but his strength being unequal to master one so young and powerful, he had called loudly for assistance, and his cries being heard by Herr Staffer and a party of his friends, the robber had been secured by their timely help.

“ I regret to add,” he continued, “ that on searching the person of the mountaineer, six

gold pieces of ancient French coinage, were found on his person, which I am compelled reluctantly to swear to, as part of the public treasure. They were paid to the Canton as its share of a subsidy from Austria, during the struggles with the protestants in the last century, and their date, and peculiar coinage, will be found to agree exactly with those now remaining in the small iron coffer, on the second shelf to the right, on entering the money room. Much larger sums are missing, but no traces of them have yet been discovered. I grieve to make this statement, on my own account, lest it may be suspected that I have negligently discharged the duties of my office, or such an extensive robbery could not have occurred ; but my conscience is clear, for had I sat there day and night, it would have been impossible to have guarded against such daring and subtle villany. No doors have been broken open ; no violence has been used, but the whole has been performed with a science in crime, hitherto

happily unknown in our uncorrupted country. False keys must have been obtained, for the real ones, as far as I know, were never out of my chamber, and means found to dispose of the plunder, which my vigilance has hitherto failed to discover."

"Then you swear, Herr Graaf," said the President, holding forth the money taken from Walther, "that these coins were stolen by the prisoner, from the treasury?"

Michael passed his hand over his brow ere he replied, "I swear that the coffer where similar pieces will be found in the treasury, was full only three days before I arrested Walther Stanz, and found them on his person."

"That is a strong fact," returned Herr Wendel, and yet his voice had a doubtful tone, that Michael neither liked, nor understood. "We have ordered the coffer to be brought hither, that this money may be compared with its contents. Let it be placed before us!"

This command was immediately obeyed, and

an anxious murmur of curiosity ran around the table, whilst the several pieces were examined and compared. It was impossible for the most indulgent to deny their perfect similarity, which even Walther himself could not dispute, though utterly at a loss to account for it.

He could not for an instant believe that Father Paul had been the robber, leaving him to bear the punishment, and the infamy of his crime, yet he now remembered with increased agony, the reported death of the Hermit, and in deep despair, watched the unfavourable impression produced by the scrutiny of the gold upon his judges.

Staffer's evidence followed next, and though it added no new circumstance to those already elicited, it completely confirmed the leading facts to which Michael Graaf had sworn. Moreover, though the farmer was a rough selfish man, his honesty was unsuspected, and even poor Lena felt as she listened to his testimony, that those to whom Walther was un-

known, could not be blamed, should it convince them of his guilt, and her surprise was great, when Herr Wendel instead of joining in the whispered conversation of his brother magistrates, after Staffer was again silent, coolly demanded if he had any knowledge of the prisoner previous to the night in question.

Somewhat confused, he replied, that he had met him at the fairs on the Righi, and on other public occasions for years, but as he was only a bondman, he had never associated with him.

"You have no remembrance of having seen him on the path above Weggis, some days ago, or of what occurred at that meeting?" inquired Herr Wendel.

"I remember it distinctly," answered Staffer turning as red as fire, "he killed my favorite hound."

"And you chastised him, of course."

"We fought," said the farmer gruffly, "but our private differences, have nothing to do with the matter in question, and however this low

fellow may have presumed to rival, insult, or traduce me, I trust I am known too well to be suspected of swearing falsely against any man."

"Assuredly, Herr Staffer," said the President, "but where the life of a fellow creature is stake, caution is our duty. Walther Stanz, he continued, turning to the prisoner, "you have heard all that has been sworn against you, what evidence have you to adduce in your defence?"

"My own assertions of my innocence I am aware will profit me little," said the youth, with as much composure as he could command, "even were I to swear, that far from having robbed the treasury myself, my endeavours to arrest the real criminal alone brought me in contact with Herr Graaf, at midnight, in the market-place. But there is one man, whom I see now in court, could give his oath if he would, that when he found me, and sent me in pursuit of the robber, I was standing quietly at the opposite side of the Square, under the old

Church porch, near which I had been, for nearly half an hour before."

"And were you there alone?"

"No, I was not alone," returned Walther, casting his eyes on the ground.

"Ha! if the matter stands thus, would it not be easy to call your companion to prove that being there, you could not be the man whom Herr Graaf saw coming from the treasury?"

"It is impossible!" returned the youth, in a low, firm voice.

"That is strange," said one of the judges, "but take heed young man, these unsupported assertions will rather injure than assist you. Midnight was a strange hour to come from the Righi to hold a conference in such a place; but name your companion, and let the person instantly be summoned. You hesitate young man, but remember your life is at stake, and on this evidence it may probably depend."

"I do remember it," returned Walther, firmly, "but the betrayal of confidence is not

the means by which I desire to purchase life."

"This is no time for mystery," said the President, who watched with deep interest the changing countenance of the accused, "surely no friend would reproach you for claiming their aid at such a moment. Think again—and if you can call any one to prove, that when the clocks struck the midnight hour, you were in any other place but the Treasury, do it without further delay."

"Never!" returned the prisoner, "I cannot betray the secret of another."

"Then, Walther Stanz, if you will not speak the truth, I must," said a voice from the crowd, that made the young mountaineer start as if electrified, and turn in utter amazement to the spot from whence it proceeded.

But his surprise could not equal the consternation of Michael Graaf, when his ear caught the well-known tones, and he beheld the figure of Justine, whom he had locked up

in her chamber, appear suddenly by the side of Lena, in the very front of the throng. The hood of the linen mantle she had hastily thrown around her had fallen back, and every eye in that old hall was fixed with intense interest on the pale and excited countenance of that beautiful girl, as forgetting all her usual timidity, and shrinking apprehension of the public gaze, she stood there, supported alone by the strength of her love, to dare in Walther's defence, alike her uncle's wrath, and the slander of the multitude. But her feelings were wrought too high for her to heed the opinions of those she valued not, or to feel awed, even by the presence of the magistrates, whom from childhood she had regarded with terror.

But she had little cause for dread, for there is not a council in the world where her beauty would not have proved an eloquent advocate, and all there, except Michael Graaf, were at

and indulgence.

With the rapid penetration of her mind she instantly perceived the favourable impression she had made, and without daring to cast a glance at Walther, she rapidly added to his judges.

"Your Excellencies," she said, "I am the companion of Walther Stanz on the subject in question. We have known each other since childhood—we are betrothed—my uncle, the Graaf, would not let us meet at once, and Walther came from the Righi to see me then in secret."

"And you were abroad in such circumstances," inquired the President.

"He had asked me to be unde-

time, and I found Walther already awaiting me."

"And he remained with you?" demanded an aged magistrate.

"We tarried till the midnight hour had struck, and then the storm became so wild, we sought shelter from the rain under the old church porch."

"And there he left you?"

"Not till more than ten minutes had elapsed, when between the pauses of the storm we suddenly heard loud cries for help, and speedily a man came running towards us, and even before he recognised us, called earnestly for us to hasten to assist Father Paul in arresting a robber with whom he struggled."

"What Father Paul Styger, the Hermit?" said the President of the Council, who was more and more bewildered by every syllable he heard, "are you certain maiden of what you say?"

"I am as certain as that the sun is in Heaven,"

stricken figure of her uncle, with intense eagerness, sat with an agitated countenance, with his head in his hand. But she had chosen her path to rescue Walther from death and she would have pursued it, in the face of every obstacle, even if it had led to a grave.

“And what followed?” inquired Walther.

“I know little more,” she replied. “A struggle, and many voices, which approached, and remained on the spot as we were bewildered with terror, till the messenger first alarmed us, returned and told us of Walther’s arrest.”

swear to the truth of every word I have uttered."

"And moreover, with the permission of this honourable assembly, I am ready to do it!" said the little tailor stepping forward with a most consequential air.

"My brother magistrates! my friends I should say," exclaimed Michael, now thrown completely off his guard, by the appearance of this unexpected witness, and arising with uncontrollable agitation, "I grieve that a niece of mine should have dared to disgrace herself and her family in the manner that Justine Weber has this day done! but bewildered as she evidently is, by a mad and foolish passion for this worthless youth, her testimony is surely not worthy of the smallest credit, and it is a pity that time should be wasted longer—"

"Pardon me for interrupting you, Herr Iraaf," said the President with solemn courtesy, "we shall be perfectly ready to hear your opi-

nion on this matter, when Hans Brunk has made his deposition, as of course it must be materially influenced by it; and I am sure you can never consider, that time as lost, which is spent in seeking to do justice to a fellow creature."

Michael Graaf had not a word to reply, and again resumed his seat; but still he remembered, with some satisfaction, that except by the prisoner, not a word had hitherto been uttered to criminate him in the slightest degree, and though he thought with dread of the prying character of Hans, he yet clung to the hope that whatever he might know, he would disclose nothing to the disadvantage of one, to whom he was so largely indebted.

He little knew the bitter hatred long cherished against him by his humble tool, and which, like the slave endowed with brief authority over a tyrannical master, he was prompt to glut that day to the very utmost of his power.

No one is more certain to be outwitted than he who relies implicitly on his own cunning to outwit all others, and the subtle Treasurer was the last man in the world to apprehend that he was himself the dupe of the agent he despised.

CHAPTER VII.

And if he boggles at swallowing the conclusion
lustily to the truth of what I affirm ; and if
will swear again ; and if he is positive, I will insist
so that, come what will, my obstinacy shall advance

I say he's innocent ; and were he not so
Is our own blood and kin to shrink from
In fatal moments ?

BYRON. THE

Walther Stanz had gazed with admiration
and gratitude on Justine's whole
of her evidence, then, for the first time
since he had heard of the death of

excited little man prepared to reply to the interrogatories of the magistrates.

"Your name is Hans Brunk," said the President, when the new witness had taken his place on the platform.

"Yes, so please you, and a tailor by trade, as your Excellency's doublet can prove," he replied.

"And you were abroad on the night of the late storm, it appears?"

"I was, an' please you, till I had not a dry stitch about me."

"And you spoke with Walther Stanz, as has been just now sworn?"

"I saw, and I heard a great deal more than that," he returned, "for few needles are sharper than my eyes and ears. But if your Excellency will allow me, I will tell my story my own way. I must always have hold of the thread at the right end, or I am apt to tangle the skein altogether."

"Begin where you please, if you keep to the

facts connected with this affair," was the magistrate's reply.

"Thanks, thanks," returned Hans with a profound bow, "I can always make the work, when I both shape and sew it."

"To the point Sir," interrupted Herr del "did you, or did you not find W Stanz with Justine Weber, under the porch, ten minutes after midnight?"

"As to the minutes, I could not say," said the tailor; "it might be nine minutes, it might be eleven, for ought I know, but the clocks had all done striking twelve, or thereabouts, when I ran bolt up to them there, and moreover sent the young man with all speed to help Father Paul to catch the thief."

"And wherefore did you not stay to show him yourself?" retorted the President.

"I will explain all that another time," returned Hans, with unblushing effrontery; "if I am to tell my story clearly, I must do so in proper order."

"Begin, then!" was the immediate rejoinder, and the little man clearing his throat, and putting his right hand in his side, whilst he balanced himself with becoming dignity on the corresponding leg, began his oration.

"I have been intimate with Father Paul the Hermit for many years!"

"The devil you have!" thought Michael Graaf, but he durst not utter a syllable.

"I knew him when I was going the rounds of my apprenticeship, and he was a very different man in those days to what he is now."

"What is all this to the purpose, Sir?" inquired the Treasurer, with uncontrollable impatience.

"You will know that soon enough, Herr Graaf, I promise you," returned Hans, with a significant nod, and thus proceeded.

"It was once in my power to do him a kindness, and he never forgot it; but to be brief, he sometimes employs me to transact a little business for him, and it happened one night, a

short time ago, I was sitting up expecting him, for he seldom leaves the mountain by day, and just as I was putting the last stitch to a flannel night-gown for the apothecary's sister's husband's assistant, I happened, for want of something better to do, to pop my head out of my own window, when what should I see, (for it was moonlight, please your Excellencies) but a dark figure come out of a house at the further end of the square, and steal along as sily as a water-rat, under the eaves of the houses, till it arrived at the old treasure tower! it then turned a dark lantern, and I saw it unlock the door, and go in."

"Villain, why did you not immediately inform me of this?" cried Michael Graaf, half starting from his seat.

"I thought, mayhap, there might be no occasion!" said the little man, with caustic tranquillity.

"And saw you nothing more?" inquired Herr Wendel.

"Trust me, I did not budge till I had seen the man come out again with his lantern ; which he did in about a quarter of an hour, and moreover, though he wore a cloak, I could plainly distinguish he carried a heavy load under it."

"And had you no idea who he was?" demanded the President.

"That may be as it happened ;" returned Hans, fixing his eyes with infinite exultation on the agitated countenance of the Treasurer ; "at all events, I thought I had seen enough for that night, and so I went to bed. For the two following ones, you may be sure I kept watch, but the thief was cautious, and did not return till the third night. It was moonlight again, and I saw him as plainly as I see you."

"And did you recognize him?"

"You shall hear. I now thought the matter was growing serious, and that it would be better to tell Father Paul. Don't be surprised

"But I don't," he said, addressing the Treasurer, who was sitting with distinguished dignity at the head of the table. "He is a young man, and I don't think I could not have a better one."

"Certainly not," said the Treasurer; "no."

The consequence was the Fleming joined the rest of the party. He saw the robber once more, and then with him when he had seen him, he went to the Treasurer, he hesitated to place himself in the hall in which he must remain. He then spoke to them as he took out his pocket-book to show them what he had got: "Look at this, you know the man?"

"That is the man," said the Treasurer, "certainly."

"The man," said the Treasurer, "certainly."

"Nevertheless, you are," said the guilty man, "nothing was finished from his side, for the circumstances that come from every

part of the assembly, almost instantly warned **him** of his error, and sinking back overpowered **with** shame and consternation, his head drooped **on** his bosom, his hands hung unnerved from the arms of the chair, and his whole figure bore the expression of helpless despair and guilt.

The effect of Hans' disclosure was equally electrical on the whole assembly, and so great was the agitation it excited amongst the judges, and so loud was the expression of the people's satisfaction, that for some time there appeared little chance that tranquillity would be sufficiently restored for the tailor to conclude his narrative.

The delight of the little man surpassed all description, as with elevated head he looked around on the commotion he had excited, and with an air of infinite importance bestowed his nods of congratulation alternately on Walther, Justine, and Lena.

The continued tumult, fortunately for the Treasurer, afforded him time to recover some

degree of composure, and silence was no soon~~x~~ partially restored, than he requested permissio~~n~~ to reply to the infamous charges that had been brought against him.

This was of course readily granted, and suc~~h~~ was the intense curiosity of all present to hear his explanation, that notwithstanding the num~~b~~ers assembled in the hall, a pin might have been heard to drop at the further end of it during the pause that followed.

"I must confess," he began in a somewhat tremulous voice, "that I am mortified to find my brother magistrates disposed to lend credi~~t~~ to these base aspersions against the character of one of their own body;—one whom they have hitherto professed to esteem, and who I am proud to say has long served the city with advantage to its inhabitants and credit to him~~-~~self. I am deeply grieved to find that the un~~-~~ceasing labours of twenty years have not secured me the confidence of my fellow-citizens, which I blush not to confess it has been the unchang~~-~~

ing object of my hope to win. Yet allow me to inquire, what does this tailor's evidence prove against me, even if every word of it be accepted as truth? Merely that I, Michael Graaf, the man whom the Canton has honoured by confiding to him the charge of its wealth, had thought it expedient to visit the treasury by night instead of day. Surely you must all admit this is not an act to be stigmatized as crime, were it indisputable; but I deny the truth of Hans Brunk's testimony altogether. I defy him to bring forward the slightest corroboration of one word he has uttered to my dishonour; whilst even admitting that my niece's evidence, combined with the oath of this man of shreds and patches, may disprove a part of my charges against Walther Stanz, yet the fact of the city gold being found upon his person, remains unaccounted for; and allow me to add, I consider that more is proved by a circumstance so extraordinary, than by the oaths of twenty such witnesses as this Hans Brunk.

He may swear he saw me going a hundred times to the treasury if he pleases, and I should scarcely think it worth while to contradict him, if he had no better proof of it than his own word -

"Say all you have to say in my disparagement, Herr Graf, and then tell me if this is not your own lantern?" said Hans with a contemptuous smile, as he drew the said article from his pocket, and shook it in triumph at the dismayed Treasurer.

Again an uncontrollable expression of satisfaction, a low laugh of derision, arose from the spectators, and short exclamations of surprise burst from the lips of many of the judges. Michael alone, prepared for this by the warning of Justice, was entirely unmoved, and coolly said, he was glad to see his lantern was not lost, - in having cast it away in his struggle with Walther Stanz, he had afterwards sought for it in vain.

"Then you admit it to be yours?" inquired Herr Wendel.

“Assuredly,” was the Treasurer’s reply ;
“but I defy any man to deduce anything to
my disadvantage from its discovery.”

“Did you cast nothing else away at the
same time?” returned the magistrate with a
scrutinizing glance.

“Nothing that I am aware of,” returned
Michael.

“Are you certain, that you never saw this
bag of gold before, Herr Graaf?” he continued,
suddenly placing the lost plunder of the Treas-
urer, with a heavy clang on the table before
him.

Michael changed colour, but replied in a low
voice, that he should be better able to answer
the question, when he knew what the bag
contained.

It was instantly untied, and the contents
spread on the table for general inspection.

“Ha,” said Graaf, the moment he had taken
one of the gold pieces in his hand, “where
might this money be found, Herr Wendel?”

"On the very spot, where your struggle with Walther Stanz commenced."

"Then it indeed affords unanswerable evidence of his guilt, for these coins are of the same stamp with those we took from his person, and the emptiness of the coffer is at once accounted for."

"But there is no evidence to prove this was ever in the prisoner's possession," said Herr Wendel.

"But though the bag was not actually found upon him," returned Graaf, "coin of the same stamp was; and to reject such evidence of his guilt, would, I am compelled to say, not be leniency, but folly."

"But were it possible to prove that he came honestly by the gold in question?"

"What did he in the treasury at midnight?" inquired Michael eagerly.

"That is a fact that rests entirely on your word, Herr Graaf," returned the President, "and that has already been impugned by the witnesses."

"But I deny their statements, and surely the oath of one of my condition, is as worthy of belief as theirs."

"No condition will sanction perjury," said the President solemnly, "and however you may seek to invalidate the evidence we have already heard, I have just received notification, that there is a third witness in favour of the prisoner, waiting without, whose testimony no man can dispute."

"Let him appear!" he added, turning to one of the servants of the court; and a silent pause of expectation followed this command.

Michael Graaf, who only a minute before had exulted at the idea of having entangled his enemies in their own net was utterly confounded. He knew not what evil he had to dread, and unprepared to meet it, he started with absolute horror, when advancing from an opposite door, Father Paul himself stood before him!

Every eye was turned with wonder on the venerable Hermit, who supported by one the

monks of the Hospital, leant upon his staff, and gazed around the agitated assembly, for a few moments ere he advanced towards the platform of the judges. His monkish froc~~g~~, girded with a cord, hung in large folds around him, his long beard reached nearly to his middle, and the silvery locks that encircled his high bald head, fell waving on his stooping shoulders. Piety, benevolence, and imagination imparted a benignity and elevation to his noble countenance, rarely seen except in the superhuman creations, that embody the soul of some immortal painter.

The slant sunbeams fell from a tall gothic window on this venerable figure, casting all the crowds behind, into one broad mass of shadow, whilst before him, grouped in the golden light, were the magistrates, the prisoner and the witnesses.

Pale and feeble from his wounds, the eye of Father Paul had lost nothing of its lustre, and the guilty Michael quailed beneath his wri~~st~~.

ing glance, as it momentarily rested upon him. But it was Walther the old man eagerly sought for; bright was the smile with which he greeted him, and so great was the prisoner's joy at beholding the Hermit again alive, that he at once forgot all the humiliating intrigues of Michael Graaf, and the bitter thoughts of human nature they had engendered. The noble aspirations and lofty feelings of other days were at once revived by the sight of Father Paul, and he felt that though the wicked may triumph for awhile, the soul of the just is beyond their control, and even amidst the fiercest persecution has unutterable sources of felicity, which neither cruelty, nor calumny, nor oppression can poison, or exhaust.

Reports had already got abroad into the city concerning the extraordinary disclosures of Hans Brunk; the hall was crowded to excess, hundreds were pressing at the doors for admission, and numbers had clambered to the outside of the windows to obtain a glimpse of

the proceedings within. Such a universal excitement had never before prevailed in Leucurue; the tradesmen forsook their shops, the artisans their labours, and the women their domestic cares. The names of Walther Stanz, Michael Graaf, and Father Paul, were bandied from lip to lip, mingled with confused tales and the public curiosity was at its height when the Hermit, in obedience to a summons from the President of the council, advanced to give his evidence.

There was a low murmur of approbation when out of consideration to his holy character and present weakness, a chair was placed for him near the judges, but he was no sooner seated, than a profound silence instantaneously prevailed.

"You appear before us, to give testimony in favour of the prisoner, Walther Stanz?" was the President's first demand.

"I do," returned the Hermit. "Wounded by an unknown hand upon the Right, on the

evening following his arrest, my weakness has hitherto delayed my descending to the city, but I trust I am yet in time to prevent the commission of injustice. The money found in the possession of Walther Stanz, when seized at midnight in the market place, he received from my hands, on the preceding day ; and that money, was given to me by Michael Graaf himself! Herr President," he continued when the clamour occasioned by this declaration had in some measure subsided, " I demand that this perjured man, the unworthy Treasurer of the Canton, be put under immediate arrest, not only on a charge of extensive public robbery, but for treason against the state; for distributing French bribes amongst the citizens, and secretly plotting with the Generals and agents of the French Directory, to open the gates and deliver up the Treasury of Lucerne to these grasping and hypocritical invaders, who, under the pretext of liberty, have come to force upon us the the crude doc-

ic

THE THIRST FOR GOLD.

was it that this philosophy, instead of ~~the~~
the system which has hitherto constituted
the glory and prosperity of our mountain
country.

"Are you prepared to swear to these asser-
tions?" demanded the President.

"Without hesitating," he replied; and there
was a ceremony of taking an oath having
been gone through he thus proceeded. "I ~~not~~
swear to the truth of all I have asserted,
but I will give you the most incontestible proof
of the truth of my story. Many years ago, Michael
Walter came himself to Milan, by a receipt
now still in my possession, to repay on demand
the sum of ten thousand florins. I forbear to
state the particulars of the transaction, since
they are quite unconnected with the present
business. It is only to say I claimed the debt,
and the night before Walter's arrest he brought
me the money due. I gave him my re-
ceipt, and he returned me this note of the pay-
ment. His hand-writing is doubtless known to

many here," he added, as he handed this slip of paper to the President; "my own receipt Herr Graaf could probably produce. Of this money I gave Walther Stanz the six gold pieces found upon him; the remainder is in my cavern, and is composed of ancient coins, many exactly similar to those before you, which, with the bag that contained them, I recognize as having been found by Hans Brunk, on the spot where I first attempted to arrest Michael Graaf, when laden with fresh plunder he came forth from the treasury. My strength was not a match for his. I called aloud for assistance, and Walther Stanz unexpectedly came to my aid from the opposite side of the square. When Staffer likewise arrived, Michael Graaf adroitly turned the accusations from himself against the young mountaineer; but again I make most solemn oath that of these charges he is as innocent as the spirits in heaven."

A deep silence followed this speech, and the anxiety of all present had reached its highest

point when the President arose from his seat, and with solemn dignity addressed his companions.

"My brother magistrates," he said, "after what we have just heard, I imagine your judgment will agree with mine, which is, that Walther Stanz be declared innocent of the robbery of the public treasury, and immediately set at liberty."

With one voice the judges ratified this decision.

"Walther Stanz," then continued the President, addressing the young mountaineer, "it is with the most heartfelt satisfaction that I now pronounce your full and entire acquittal of every charge brought by Michael Graaf against you, and congratulate you, in the name of all your judges, on your marvellous liberation from the intricate snares that have been woven around you. We trust that your present gratification will in some measure indemnify you for your unjust detention; and be assured that the man who with unscrupulous

perjury has endeavoured to make another the victim of his crimes, shall be dealt with as he deserves. Gaoler, make Michael Graaf your prisoner. Walther Stanz is free!"

A simultaneous shout of exultation burst from the countless multitude in that vast Hall at this announcement. No judgment given there, had ever before afforded such universal satisfaction, and the clamour continued long and loud, till it was echoed by many hundred voices on the outside of the building.

Walther, half bewildered by the sudden change in his fortune, vainly attempted to express his gratitude to the magistrates. More agitated than he had been by the prospect of condemnation, the words died on his lips, or were drowned by the deafening clamour, till finding the effort vain, he respectfully and silently saluted the august assembly, and turned to clasp his weeping mother in his arms.

Whilst Lena with speechless delight hung round him, unseen by all, the hand of Justine

was pressed in his, and the only shadow on his joy was, that in such a place he could not give expression to the boundless gratitude and love with which the generous self-devotion of this fair and noble creature had inspired him.

But she was richly requited; and the happiness of that moment sufficed to obliterate from her mind every trace of preceding sorrow. She even for a time forgot her uncle's terrible position, which only a few minutes before had filled her with dismay; in that vast assembly the only object she beheld was Walther Stanz, and by his triumph her thoughts were all engrossed.

With a calm and peaceful smile Father Paul looked upon the happiness he had created. He arose; and as he stood leaning on his staff opposite to Michael Graaf, the contrast between those two old men was as powerful as light and darkness had been brought into immediate contact. In the soul of the Hermit all was pure, benign, and passionless, whilst in

the person of Michael Graaf, the fearful results of sin were horribly exemplified. The shame he most dreaded — the dishonour he would have died to avert had come upon him, and after a long course of years, when his labours were crowned with success, his avarice with riches, and his selfish vanity with honour, the consequences of the first crime from whence all had emanated, had struck him down at one blow, in the midst of his prosperity.

All he possessed would he then willingly have given to have escaped from the contemptuous scorn of his fellow citizens; but it was part of his punishment, and the misery he had inflicted on others, was largely avenged, by the agony he that hour endured, when Father Paul proceeded to lay before the Council the most indisputable proofs of his intrigues with the French, and at length produced a letter written by him only two days before, to General Schauenberg, urging him to march upon Lucerne without a moment's delay, and

THE TREASURY FOR GOLD.

discussing the weakness of the garrison, and the amount of public and private plunder to be expected. In this important document, was contained a list of the most weakly citizens, who were supposed to be French, were pointed out as the suspects in pillage, and as this was read aloud, many present heard themselves named for restriction, by the very man who had previously professed himself their friend, their indignation burst forth, with unrestrained language.

It was at this time the President endeavoured to restore the tranquillity by naming a hall of justice. The summer every moment became warmer and hotter, and when the Treasurer was at last forced to stand his trial for treason and robbery, the announcement of his destiny was heard by few besides the guilty man himself.

As night the tumult became so fierce and violent, and so fearful were the threats denounced against him, that his removal to

prison appeared to offer the only chance of rescuing him from immediate destruction.

Never brave, the guilt-stricken man trembled from head to foot, when he heard the reproaches and angry menaces of his fellow-citizens on every side, and even Father Paul, as he watched his livid and changing countenance, alternately distorted by anger—shame—and the humiliating consciousness of detected crime, for the first time pitied the wretched being who had so deeply and irreparably injured him.

Walther Stanz, anxious to spare Justine the horror of such a spectacle, bore her half-fainting from the hall as soon as he could make his way through the throng, and Lena eagerly following, told him she had left a boat at the bridge, in which they had better at once leave the city, instead of going, as he intended, to the dwelling of Hans.

Joyfully he complied with her request, and in less than five minutes they were floating on

the quiet waters of the Lake, leaving far behind them the din and the tumult of the troubled city, and had exchanged the degrading and harassing struggles of sinful passions, for the peaceful sublimity of nature.

Then did Walther for the first time feel with triumphant exultation, that he was once more free; it seemed as if he had never before duly appreciated the value of liberty, or loved his native land with such devoted fervour as he did then. His eyes wandered with ecstasy from mountain to mountain, and as the breeze flew past him over the water, his bounding spirit felt that amidst scenes so sublime, so hallowed by all the recollections of childhood, no enterprise was too hazardous, no task too exalted for him to perform—delusive dreams, that all of imaginative mind have sometimes felt—precious moments of excitement, of which age preserves alone the regret.

The devoted and trusting Justine—the voluntary sharer of his poverty and humility—

she who for him had cast away wealth and station, and kindred, sat meanwhile at his side, gazing at him with the happy eyes of intense, unchanging love. But neither of them spoke. Words would have been inadequate to express the rapture of their deep emotion.

Lena watched them with the sober delight of maturer years. She felt that much was gained, and yet her heart was not free from care. She could not forget that a cloud of evil hung darkly threatening over the land, from whose fearful influence, neither the humble, nor the innocent would be exempt, and remembering the dreadful massacre of her countrymen in Paris only a few years before, many sad apprehensions thronged upon her mind. She thought of her helpless son, she had left upon the mountain, and plied her oar with such velocity, that long before sunset, the little party reached the foot of the Righi, and Walther with eager delight lifted Justine on shore.

It had been already agreed that instead of

returning to her former dwelling at her cousin Dame Muller's, she should occupy Walther's place in his mother's chalet, whilst for a time the young man would take up his abode with his employers the monks at the Hospital, where he had already frequently remained for weeks together.

On their arrival at their home, Lena found to her delight, that Fritz was well and happy and every thing was speedily arranged for Justine's accommodation. This done, Walther, to the surprise of all, declared his determination to return immediately to Lucerne.

"Father Paul is still weak," he said, "and it is not proper that he should be left without my help, at such a time."

"Hans no doubt will accompany him back to his cavern," said the anxious mother.

"After all he has done for me, I should be indeed ungrateful, were I to fail in so simple a duty," returned her son.

"Walther," said Justine timidly taking his

hand in hers, and looking up in his face with humble entreaty. "I fear I am going to ask too much of you—but pardon me if it is. I would fain know my poor uncle's fate!"

"Say no more," returned her lover earnestly, "all that can be learnt, you shall know this night."

Justine fervently thanked him with tears in her eyes, and Walther, then affectionately bidding her and his mother farewell, departed in search of Father Paul.

CHAPTER VIII.

"I know the inconstant people, how their mind,
With every breath of good or ill report,
Fluctuates, like summer corn before the breeze,
Quick in their hatred, quicker in their love,
Generous and hasty, soon would they redress,
All wrongs of former obloquy."

SOUTHEY RODRICK —

THERE are philosophers who deny the existence of an innate moral sense, and attribute a human love of virtue to a perception of its utility—but none who heard the burst of indignation, with which the guilty Michael Graaf was saluted by the populace assembled in the great square of Lucerne, when after his arrest he was led forth from the town—

house, could have doubted for a moment, the existence of that noble faculty in man, which by an immediate impulse, without any slow process of reasoning, at once exults in the triumph of virtue and the punishment of guilt.

No sooner was the Treasurer recognized by the crowd assembled in front of the building, than groans, hisses, and words of derision arose from every part of the multitude.

Already stunned and bewildered by his sudden reverse of destiny, and the ignominy with which he had been treated even in the presence of the magistrates, Michael stood pale and aghast at the head of the high stone steps, attempting at intervals to raise his drooping head from his bosom, and face the clamorous mob; but the effort was vain. His eyes after wandering vacantly for a second over the sea of heads before him, sunk to the ground, and his face again drooped upon his breast. His only wish at that moment was to escape from the public reproaches. Reputation had been the idol

second only to avarice in his heart ; for this he had toiled, and intrigued, and sinned, yet now in requital, he heard not praise, but mockery, and the bitter words of truth rung with insulting scorn from a thousand voices in his ears, as if the very air had found a tongue to reproach him for his iniquity. Trembling and appalled he implored his guards to make all speed to the prison, but however desirous they might be of complying with his wishes, it appeared scarcely possible to do so, for so closely gathered was the mob, that even the municipal troops, vainly attempted for some time, to force a passage.

It was long before the Treasurer and his escort could even descend the steps, but when this was accomplished, the difficulty of advancing seemed only to be increased. The people would not be put aside, and irritated by the efforts made to open a path amongst them, their indignation every moment became more ungoverned and terrific.

A report, no man knew from whence arising,

or by whom disseminated, flew rapidly from lip to lip, that the French Army, by the direction of Michael Graaf, was marching rapidly on the city, and words being no longer sufficient to prove the universal anger against the traitor, mud and stones were repeatedly thrown at him, and a tumult, wild and deadly, gradually replaced the previous angry expressions of the mob.

Michael with horror heard threats follow the reproaches which had before appalled him—louder and more fierce they waxed incessantly, and words of fearful meaning were uttered around him, too distinctly for him to doubt their import, even had the wild gestures of his enemies not sufficed to make it manifest.

“Let him at once die the death of a traitor,” was the universal cry, and as it rang through the pure, still air, he felt that his last hope had forsaken him; that his reliance on the timely arrival of the French to save him from execution, was a vain delusion, and death, of which he

had hitherto entertained little fear, death, horrible and immediate seemed inevitable.

Dim and appalling were his sensations, for he could scarcely be said to think, but amidst all, by the unerring justice of the Almighty, he distinctly felt, that his agony, his shame, and his danger, were the consequences of his deeds. Yet he thought not of their sin, but their inexpediency, and amidst all the wanderings of his distracted mind, no prayer came to his lips. Thus unprepared to die, it was with terror little short of madness, he saw the feeble struggles of his escort with the outrageous people, and heard the well known voice of his own agent Hans, calling aloud to his fellow citizens, to take prompt vengeance on the traitor, who had sold them to the enemy.

"Villain," he murmured, in a low broken voice, that yet reached the ears of the tailor "is this your return for all my hire?"

"I did what I was paid for," retorted the man "that was your work; but this is my

own. Did you think because you cheated others so often, that nobody could cheat you, master Treasurer? but though I am only a tailor, you have met with your match, I can tell you, in spite of your gold, and your pride, and your plots. Ah, Herr Graaf, I warrant since your riches oiled mens tongues, you have heard as many lies as you have told, but truth has reached you at last!"

"Down with him! down with him," roared a huge woodsman at his elbow.

"Hunt him like a rat!" cried another.

"He would sell you all for a mess of porridge: it is time he had his payment," shouted a third; and urged on by these and similar exhortations, the people furiously renewed their attempt to gain possession of the person of Michael Graaf.

Such was the force with which the condensed mass of the mob bore down upon the feeble line formed by his guards in front of him, that as a last resource, they slowly receded before

them, in order if possible to regain the town house. But crowds intercepted their way, and a stout boatman, having pushed aside the halberd of the gaoler, had already grasped the arm of the struggling Treasurer, when the loud voice of Father Paul, as he suddenly appeared upon the steps of the great door of the town house, instantaneously arrested the tumult.

“My friends and fellow countrymen,” he cried, “is it thus you infringe the glorious privileges for which our ancestors long fought and bled ! is it thus you trample on law, and order, the only safe guards of liberty, and defenders of the state ? This man is a traitor— the law is just, and he will doubtless be condemned to die. His death by the axe of the Headsman will be justice, by your hands it is murder ; and oh my countrymen, even though he may have brought the enemy to our gates, though he may have sold you to plunder, and your republic to ruin, let not the last hours of your sinking liberty be clouded, by so dark a

deed ; remember how it rose in glory, and let it set in justice, not dishonour !”

Loud shouts of applause responded to this appeal, and for a moment the Hermit exulted in the belief, that he had allayed the storm ; but the calm was only temporary, and sullen murmurs around the outskirts of the crowd, again threatened destruction to the Treasurer, when new and unexpected succour arrived, to change effectually the course of his destiny.

The loud roll of drums, and braying of trumpets rose suddenly above the people's clamour, and in the momentary lull that followed, the measured tread of legions was distinctly heard, between the pauses of this martial music.

“The French—the French—the enemy are within the gates !” burst from a thousand voices and scarcely were the words pronounced, ere the banners of the French Republic were seen waving at the end of a street leading from the gates to the square, and a body of lancers, the

advanced guard of General Schauenberg, came at full gallop down the narrow avenue.

So cautiously had their advance been made, and so deeply had the attention of the populace been engaged, that in defiance of all previous apprehensions, the danger of their proximity had been for a time forgotten. The moment after their appearance, all was terror and consternation.

The French, amazed to find the people thus assembled, as they imagined to oppose their entrance into the city, reined in their horses, and after a brief consultation, determined to charge with drawn sabres amidst the throng; but no violence was necessary to disperse the unarmed multitude. A universal panic had already seized them, and men, women, and children, with mingled cries of terror, by a common impulse sought safety in flight; but obstructed by their own numbers, escape was not easily accomplished. The feeble fell amidst

the crowd, and were trodden to death ; others, densely wedged amidst the moving mass, screamed faintly for aid, and the men, with deep imprecations against their folly for coming own there unarmed, bore down all before them in their flight.

Michael Graaf alone felt neither terror nor dismay ; forgotten even by his guards amidst the general panic, he no sooner found himself at liberty, than turning his steps in a direction opposite that taken by the fugitives, he glided rapidly through unfrequented alleys to his own home. He knew whilst the French were in possession of the city, he had nothing more to dread, either from private enmity, or public justice.

In the course of his correspondence with the invaders, it had been agreed that the French General, should, on his arrival at Lucerne, alight at the house of the Treasurer, where he was to be ready to afford him every information

necessary for the complete subjugation of the Democratic Cantons, and he was anxious to arrive there before him. This he accomplished without difficulty, and after arranging his dress, and taking some slight refreshment, received his foreign guests, with a calmness and courtesy that gave them no cause to suspect the agitation he had so recently undergone, and previously unacquainted with his person, his wan and harassed visage excited no curiosity.

Before night the whole city was occupied by the army of the invaders. The position of Michael Graaf being at first unknown to the French Generals, and his zeal in their service indisputable, his advice was sought and followed in every arrangement. His enemies were plundered and imprisoned, and his friends invested with authority, all, for a time, went so prosperously with this cunning man, that nothing for a day or two occurred to dis-

turb his tranquillity, except the removal of the public treasure, which was speedily conveyed away by the invaders, in six heavily laden waggons, thus depriving him of all further chance of future speculation.

CHAPTER IX.

Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to light for ever-more,
Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before.
There in its centre a sepulchral lamp
Burns the slow flame eternal—but unseen.

BYRON.

It was near midnight, and the moon was shedding its pale light over the tall rocky points of the Mythen, that like the pinnacles of a giant fane, crown the high mountain that divides the valley of Schwytz from that of Einsiedlen, when Father Paul and Walther Stanz, landed from a boat at the little village of Brunen, near the middle of the Lake of Lucerne.

At that hour all there was habitually as still as death ; but peace was no longer an inmate, even of these mountain districts. Lights streamed from the windows of every cottage ; the peasants were to be seen as the travellers past by, either burnishing their arms within their dwellings, or gathered in little knots in the street, discussing the tidings they had received from Lucerne.

Father Paul was no sooner recognised, than he was immediately questioned ; but his answers were brief. " Keep your rifles in your hands," he said, and strode on, with undiminished speed up the valley.

There too it was evident the alarm had spread. All things betokened agitation and preparation for the most strenuous resistance to the enemy ; ever and anon some swift-footed messenger rushed past them, bearing the tidings of the invasion from mountain to mountain, and the Hermit exulted in the conviction that the spirit of patriotism yet glowed with

undiminished fervour in his native land. He knew that the leaders were ready to direct the movements of the peasantry, but he was likewise well aware that not a moment was to be lost in organizing their undisciplined forces, and as in silence he pursued his way, his active mind was busily engaged in devising plans for the approaching war.

The feelings of Walther Stanz were not less excited than those of the Hermit; but with a proud spirit of resistance in his heart, were mingled thoughts of a different and far gentler character, and the image of Justine, in his mother's defenceless chalet, arose perpetually before him. More than once he turned to address his companion, but as the rays of the moon fell on his venerable countenance, he saw he was so wrapped in his own high visions, that the words died on his lips, and he continued his way in silence.

The first words were spoken by Father Paul himself, when on reaching an open field, where

the shadows of the budding walnut trees lay still and broad on the rich green herbage, he suddenly arrested his steps, and laying one hand on the young man's arm, pointed with the other to a narrow path, that, diverging from the road they had hitherto followed, led over the mountains towards the Righi.

"Here we must part, my son," he said, "there lies my way, whilst you must make all speed to Schwytz. I have told you all you must say to Aloys Reding, the Landshauptmann; assure him, moreover, that now when the hour we have both long foreseen and dreaded has arrived, I equally rely on his zeal and his abilities, and hope, ere long, to prove that I have not failed in my share of our compact."

"I will obey you in all things," said Walther, fervently, "but whilst I am thus employed, I implore you, Father Paul, not to forget my mother. Should the French advance in that direction, I shall not be near to assist her; and Justine is with her," he added in a tremulous

voice, "for me she has sacrificed her home and kindred, and it distracts me to think what dangers she may be involved in, by her generosity."

"I will watch over both," returned Father Paul, "and should there be danger on the mountain, will find them another home. Come to me to-morrow at noon, and I will talk to you more of this. It is fit that Justine should have no cause to repent that she preferred truth to riches."

"I will fight for her to the last drop of my blood," said Walther, eagerly.

"I doubt it not," returned the Hermit, "but remember to-morrow I shall expect to see you at the cavern with news from Aloys Reding."

"If I am alive, I will fail not," said the youth, and without further parley, they turned and pursued their appointed ways.

Very different were the contemplations of the aged and the young, as they that night continued to traverse, in the bright moon-

beams, the wild and beautiful scenery of those mountain passes.

Walther's heart was full of joy, and hope, and gladness ; he exulted in his recent escape from danger, and the noble proofs Justine had afforded him of her love, and scarcely able to comprehend the reality of his felicity, he paused more than once when he remembered the dark and narrow prison he had so recently inhabited, to look around, and assure himself that he laboured under no delusion.

The hour of activity he had long panted for had at length arrived ; his existence was no more without an object, and he doubted not that all the fervent wishes of his past years, for noble deeds, and honour, and renown, would be accomplished in the approaching struggle.

He knew nothing of war, but from books. He could not form even the most remote conception of the reckless cruelty with which human beings heap tortures, and starvation,

and death, on one another; he was ignorant alike of the cold-blooded barbarity and passionate frenzy, which war lets loose to ravage and destroy. He had seen little of the fiercer passions of mankind, and suspected not, that law makes hypocrites of many men, who, when its bonds, and the restraints of opinion are swept away, rush eagerly to indemnify themselves for their long subjection, by the wanton indulgence of their sinful natures. He knew not that wild theories of universal happiness, render many men callous, or blind to the individual misery they produce, in order to realize their systems, and that even vanity is content to purchase its triumphs, by the wrongs and sufferings of mankind.

In truth the heart of Walther was that night too full to philosophise, and on he went, with light step and bounding heart, heeding nothing around him, till, as he approached the little town of Schwytz, successive shouts burst upon the still night, to be echoed from mountain and

from valley. When he entered its streets, he found all there in commotion; none of the inhabitants had retired to rest, whilst men from the surrounding districts, arms in hand, thronged the market-place, where lights were glancing in every dwelling.

When Walther at length succeeded in making his way through the crowds of women and children who obstructed the avenues thither, he found a vast crowd assembled amidst the old gable-ended houses, listening with intense interest to a man, who more elevated than the rest, was addressing them in simple, but powerful language, on the subject of the French invasion. He could not distinguish his features, but he soon learnt that it was Aloys Reding himself. The accomplishment of his mission was therefore necessarily delayed, and such was the eloquence of the speaker, as he stated the wrongs, and duties of his countrymen, that for a time he even forgot the purpose that brought

him thither, whilst participating in the overwhelming enthusiasm of all around.

The speech of the Commander-in-chief, was at length concluded, by his desiring his listeners to seek a brief repose, ere they reassembled in the meadows to the west of the town.

"I will be there," he said, "with the banner of the Canton, and like our forefathers of old, we will seek the blessing of heaven upon our enterprise, ere we march to encounter our enemies."

Loud shouts rent the sky, as he then turned away with the chief magistrates and officers of Schwytz, towards his own dwelling.

Walther lost no time in following him thither, and no sooner was the object of his visit made known to the commander, than he was admitted to his presence, without a moment's delay.

For an instant, as the youth entered this august assembly of men high in authority and reputation, he felt abashed by his sense of in-

feriority, but quickly forgetting self in his anxiety for the public welfare, he advanced with respectful modesty to Aloys Reding, and delivered to him a letter with which he had been charged by Father Paul, and replied to all the inquiries put to him concerning the plans of the Hermit, with the utmost calmness and perspicuity.

The Landshauptmann, well remembering their former interview, and all his friend had told him of the youth, was greatly struck by the alteration of his appearance and manner, since they parted on the Righi. He seemed at once to have started from youth to manhood, from the shepherd to the soldier, and ignorant of the trials and the passions that during that brief interval had wrought so great a change, he looked with amazement on the noble bearing, and spirited countenance of the mountaineer. It needed no words to convince him of his bravery, but it was evident he was likewise possessed of intellect, a quality far more rare,

among the untutored shepherds of those hills ; and well aware of its value at such a time, he at once requested him to accept a place in his own troop, and remain with him till the time appointed for their march.

Walther's heart beat high as he accepted this proposal ; but the fervent, though brief expression of his gratitude, was scarcely uttered, ere further discourse was prevented, by the repeated shouts of the populace without, which as if echoed by many thousand voices, seemed to arise not only from the streets, but from the valleys and the hills around.

The Commander-in-chief, his friends, and Walther Stanz, equally apprehensive of some unforeseen calamity, rushed with precipitation from the house. Not a creature was near to reply to their eager questions, but they saw hundreds afar off, hurrying with loud clamours to the outskirts of the town, and beneath the whole canopy of heaven was widely spread, a firelike atmosphere of lurid light.

The glare seemed brightest above the Righi, and many a terrific idea thronged upon the mind of Walther, as he gazed on the unnatural lustre, and thought of Justine, and Father Paul.

Thither in fact the Hermit had proceeded by the shortest paths. Many days had passed since he had visited his cavern, and many moons had arisen and set, since he had watched at midnight, the glittering spray of the fountain, and as his fancy reverted to this scene, which habit had endeared to him, he felt as if he had been wandering in a strange land, where the lack of sympathy with his usual thoughts, had, for the time, erased even their strong impressions from his mind.

He had been struggling with the paltry crimes, and the selfishness, and duplicity of corrupted human beings, and though truth by his influence had triumphed, it was with inexpressible delight that he felt the ordeal was past, and he at liberty once more, to return to hold converse with nature in her fairest haunts,

and employ his mind with the great principles by which mankind is directed to eternal good, instead of the petty intrigues, and passions, which though too frequently employed to procure immediate advantage, are alike the offspring and the cause of error and of evil.

With deep anxiety he thought of the danger impending over his country, and convinced that only one assistance could avail in the approaching struggle, although the moonbeams were shining on the waterfall, he passed without pause into his cavern, and there sinking on his knees before the crucifix, in long and earnest prayer, implored a blessing upon the arms of Switzerland. Peace and hope came to his own heart, as he knelt, and with a steadiness of purpose far unlike enthusiasm, he arose prepared to sacrifice his life in a cause, which he fully believed he was appointed by heaven to defend.

He went forth to his accustomed seat; the mountains and the rocks, in huge masses of

light and shade, towered high into the cloudless air, casting their dark shadows athwart the deep valley of pines at his feet. He looked towards the waterfall; the rays of the moon still reached its sparkling waves, and there envelopped in their misty shroud, dimly and fitfully visible to his excited fancy, hovered the form of his guardian spirit.

“Once more my beloved,” he cried, stretching his arms towards it, “once more do I behold thee upon earth; but ere we part, give me some sign, that I may hope to meet thee when the grave is past!”

The wind sighed from the valley, scattering for an instant the glittering dew of the cataract, and Father Paul fancied he beheld the figure of his beloved, pointing with an ineffable smile to the skies, ere the moon passed behind the hill, and the apparition was shrouded in darkness. Never for a moment did the old man doubt the reality of this visitation, and absorbed by the feelings the vision had excited, he

forgot for a few moments after its disappearance, the purpose which had that night brought him to the Righi. His head sunk on his bosom, and lost in awe, the grave seemed to give up its dead, and eternity to reveal its mysteries to his soul. But when he again looked up, and saw thick clouds had covered the face of the sky, the darkness awoke him from his trance, as adversity rouses the strong soul to activity. He was yet on earth, and he had yet earth's duties to perform. They were nothing to him, save as he regarded the welfare of other men ; but it was long since he had ceased to live to himself, and putting away all remembrance of the past, and all dreams of an unknown future, he arose and entered his cave.

His first employment there, was to strike a light, and setting fire to a long dried pine branch, he again went forth with the burning torch in his hand. He did not pause as before, at the mouth of his rude dwelling, but hurry-

ing on with a speed of which few would have been capable, after the fatigues of the past day, he ascended from rock to rock, and precipice to precipice, to the summit of the Righi.

He reached the peak of the mountain, whilst the fragments of his torch yet threw a glittering light upon a huge pile of leaves, and fern, and forest branches, that by his wise precaution, had been already gathered there. As he stood alone on that high solitude, for a moment he looked around with intense anxiety, on the world that lay wide extended beneath. There lights in village, and in chalet, yet twinkled far and wide amidst the darkness.

"It is well," he murmured, "the brave are ~~stir~~ to answer to my signal, and these expiring embers in the feeble hand of age, shall ~~kindle~~ a fire throughout the land, that the ~~armies~~ of mighty nations shall vainly strive to ~~quench~~."

So saying, he laid his dying torch upon the ~~pile~~, and in another instant a tall pillar of light

shot up from the inflammable materials, far into the vault of heaven. Motionless the old man stood beside the beacon, gazing eagerly, not on the fire he had kindled, but on the darkness it had deepened by its glare. Minutes passed away, yet he moved not; the fury of the flames grew fainter, yet he sought not to replenish the blaze; his whole soul was engrossed by the desire to ascertain that its purpose was fulfilled.

At length a spark appeared upon the summit of the Rossberg, a second on the Righi Kulm—another—and another—now right, now left—now near, now afar off, glowed and glanced upon the gloom of night. Redder than stars they flickered for a moment, and then successively burst into broad bright flames, till the illumed atmosphere was like a canopy of light.

The blood rushed with the vigour of youth to the Hermit's heart, as he gazed on the glorious spectacle, and as beacon after beacon

threw their wild lights over the peaks of the giant mountains, he exulted, as if he had heard the answering voices of his countrymen rejoicing at his appeal to their courage and their patriotism.

Patiently he waited till the last spark of the fires had died away, ere he returned to his cave, and with high hopes for the future liberty and prosperity of Switzerland, he at length lay down on his bed of leaves, to take a brief repose, ere dawn should renew the necessity for his labours.

CHAPTER X.

*They, with one consent,
Gave all their voices to the inspiring cry,
Victory and Vengeance :*

SCOTNEY. RODRIGUE.

*Hark ! was there not
A murmur as of distant voices, and
The tramp of feet in martial unison ?*

BYRON.

FATHER PAUL was again astir before the sun had arisen from behind the eastern hills, but he knew that his work brooked no delay, and no sooner were his religious duties concluded, than, taking his staff in hand, he turned his steps towards the valley of Schwytz.

High and holy thoughts were in his mind, and as he glided rapidly through the mountain

mists, the old man appeared rather like one of the ministering spirits, whom some believe to direct by their intermediate power the actions and destiny of mankind, than a feeble mortal, subject himself to all the infirmities and passionate frailty of a fallen nature.

Intent upon his own ideas, he was, unconscious how far he had advanced upon his way, when at a sudden turn of the path, he was met abruptly by a man in a peasant's garb, who with breathless speed was climbing the steep ascent. It was Walther Stanz.

"Father Paul," he said, "it is well you are thus far on your road, for I come from Aloys Reding in search of you."

"Ha!" returned the old man eagerly, "did he see the beacon's blaze?"

"Ay, and half Switzerland has beheld it likewise, for all night the men have been pouring into Schwytz from hill and valley, and battle is the universal cry. Those who have no rifles, have axes, and scythes, and staves,

and sickles, and even the wild hunters from the upper Alps, have left their game to seek for other spoil."

"And Aloys Reding is their leader?"

"He sends you this paper," returned the youth delivering a note as he spoke, "it will doubtless tell you, that he intends to advance with his army near the Lake of Zug, so as to intercept the French in their march upon Goldau."

"The plan is good," said the Hermit, "we have already discussed it. Hath he need of me, that you come hither in such haste?"

"It was decided in last night's council, that you should bless the banners before the war is commenced, and I am sent to tell you, holy father, that the troops will pass the foot of this ravine, soon after sun-rise."

"I will be there without fail,—so much for public duty," said the priest, then suddenly changing his tone to one of tender affection, such as only Walther had ever heard from his

lips, he continued, " my son—my beloved son, did I not tell you that troubles were at hand, that the adventures you craved were rapidly approaching? and even now they have come ! I see, young man, you rejoice in the fulfilment of my prophecy, that your eyes flash, and your cheeks glow with proud delight at the sounds of battle, though afar off ; but better, far better would it be for you to cast ashes upon your head, and sit down in sackcloth and tears, to deprecate the wrath of heaven. Our young corn will be trodden under foot, our flocks devoured by the spoiler ; fire will consume our dwelling places, the cry of the widow will be on the breeze, and the taint of death on the corrupted air !"

" We will conquer, and avert such evils," said Walther earnestly.

" The sword of war once unsheathed, no human strength can avert its horrors. Ah, Walther ! Walther !" said the old man mournfully, " you wished for glory, but you know

not the fearful price at which it must be won. Even though triumph wait upon our arms, even though by the mercy of heaven the invaders be driven with disgrace from our unconquered land, success will be dearly purchased, and death, and famine, and sorrow will long remain to mark the course of the invaders."

"You know not, Father Paul, how many defenders our country has already on foot," said the young mountaineer, "though only so brief a time has elapsed since the first war-note was sounded in her valleys; but when the mountains have caught the echoes, every gorge will pour forth men full armed for resistance, till such a force is gathered, that these insolent hirelings, must be driven back with slaughter and disgrace from our wild passes."

"The will of the Lord be done!" returned Father Paul, "but much may happen ere then, and if it is so ordered that I survive not this wild struggle, when I am in the grave, remember, Walther, there is a small cavity in the rock

behind the old oak coffer in my cavern; fail not to look for it, and its contents will suffice to console you for my loss. Yet, my son, do not forget me! remember sometimes, that there was once an old man who loved you as his own child—who clung to you, as a miser to his treasure, and who in his solitude, blessed you again and again with his whole soul, as I do now. For once let me clasp you to my heart, and implore you, that whatever time may bring to light, you will not curse my memory!" and he flung his arms around the astonished youth, and hid his agitated features on his shoulder.

"You amaze me, Father Paul," returned Walther in broken accents, "the debt of gratitude I owe you, can never be repaid, and though I march with Aloys Reding, in defence of my country, my next care will be to watch over your safety. It is thought we shall not leave the valley, and we shall meet, I doubt not, frequently."

"Risk not your young life for mine, my son,"

answered the Hermit. "Go and fulfil your duties, you will then surely meet your reward, here, or hereafter."

"Yet tell me before I go, if you have heard any tidings of Justine! and if by chance you meet her, say I will be at my mother's chalet at midnight."

"Walther," returned the priest with deep solemnity, "this cannot—must not be! Such visits are improper, both on the girl's account, and on your own! Leave her to my care, and rely upon her safety."

"Father Paul, I will leave her to no man's care!" cried Walther impetuously. "It is I alone who have deprived her of home, and friends, and wealth, and I should be unworthy to fight under the banner of Schwytz, if I could allow even that duty to impede the service which I owe to her."

"But respect is likewise her due," said the priest, "and remember, young man, that even

in the most lawless times, no honourable man is licensed to give food for busy tongues to wound a maiden's honour."

"By the Saints, I would silence with a bullet the man who dared to whisper ought to her discredit," replied the young soldier impetuously.

"Give no man cause," said the Hermit, "make her your wife!"

"Ha, Father Paul, do I hear right!" cried Walther; "do you sanction that, which I longed, yet dared not propose?"

"Why should I not?" was the reply. "Justine has now no protector but yourself; it will be mercy to supersede the claims of Michael Graaf, and this can only legally be done, by one who calls her wife. Women were not meant to fight alone with the world, even in tranquil times, and more especially in war have need of a husband's protection and support."

"You speak my secret thoughts," cried the

youth; "but even could I win Justine's consent to an immediate marriage, I know not when, time or opportunity could now be found. Were I to leave my post by day, I should be branded as a coward, and disgraced for ever."

"Why not at night?" said Father Paul tranquilly. "Come at midnight to the Chapel of our Lady, and you will find me ready."

"How shall I warn Justine of this? how shall I win her consent?"

"Trust all to me," answered the old man. "Perhaps you may yet one day discover, that you have much to pardon me, and I would fain do you this service Walther, that when you make a summary of all my deeds, love may weigh down the balance in my favour. But begone! begone! the mists are already rising from the valley, and my feet are less swift than yours. Tell Aloys Reding I will be true to my word."

"And Justine?"

"Shall await you at midnight. Farewell and heaven speed our work!"

Walther did not wait to be again dismissed, but with a hasty salutation he sprang down the rugged path, and in a few seconds was lost to view amongst the brushwood. The old man awhile stood still, after his disappearance, and lost in thought seemed to have forgotten the summons of the General, but whatever might be the subject that engrossed his mind, it was quickly mastered by other images, and with hasty steps he resumed his way; but no longer in the same direction, and turning aside ere long, into the dry bed of a torrent, that led amidst the pine forests, he proceeded by its abrupt and rapid descent, towards Arth.

The scene was one of most imposing grandeur; the whole valley of Goldau between the Righi and the Rossberg, and the deep ravine down which lay the path of the Hermit, were alike shrouded in mist, save when a hoary mass of rock, or towering crag was momentarily

visible, through some fissure in the moving shroud, that magnified its grandeur. Not a living form was to be descried amidst the flitting vapour, and Father Paul repeatedly paused, and vainly listened for any sounds of life, in that dim solitude. The song of the peasant was still, and the jangling bells of the flocks were not yet to be heard mingling with the torrent's murmur.

More than half an hour elapsed, and the old man had wound his way far down towards the valley, ere his steps were suddenly arrested by the long sad note of a shepherd's horn that, like the wailing of an invisible spirit, was wafted from mountain to mountain, till its echoes died away into the skies. But no silence followed; the strain was caught by another, and another, and another, in loud, and long succession, and when at length it ceased, the Hermit heard, like the gushing of waves upon a pebbly shore, the measured footsteps of a multitude, and then

the shouts of many thousand voices, burst with one accord upon his ear.

The sun broke through the clouds that had concealed its rise ; the breeze wafted the mists from the valley, and there disclosed an army of more than three thousand men, drawn up in regular array, upon a grassy level, at the foot of the rock where Father Paul stood, like the statue of a Patron Saint, whose favour they had come to supplicate, before they marched on to battle.

Though the ranks of this patriot band were irregular, and its arms various and ill assorted, the men of whom it was composed were ready to die in defence of the banners of the Cantons around which they were clustered, and every heart beat with lofty indignation against the French invaders, who had presumed to abrogate their ancient laws and liberties. They were almost all plain, poor men ; simple shepherds of the Alps ; ignorant alike of the philosophy and liberality of their more civilized enemies ; but not one was without a home to which his heart

was bound by the strong ties of love ; ties no human legislators can burst asunder ; and the whole body was animated by a spirit of patriotism, that has frequently sufficed to conquer by its indomitable pertinacity, the hired armies of invaders, though incalculably superior to themselves in numbers and in discipline.

As Father Paul expected, Aloys Reding was Commander-in-chief of these gallant men, and Walther Stanz had a place in one of the foremost ranks.

The Solitary was instantaneously recognised, both by the Landshauptmann and his followers, and the joyous acclamations that welcomed him, at once proclaimed the respect with which the venerable man was universally regarded.

“ Well met, Father Paul ! ” cried the General, as soon as silence was restored, “ you have doubtless heard the wolves have broken into the fold, and that peaceful shepherds, as we are, we are compelled to take up arms in defence of our mountain homes, and the laws we inherited

from our ancestors. But not unblest would we go forth to battle! the Lord of Hosts defended our fathers, when their enemies poured thick as locusts on their valleys, and again, by His aid, we hope to drive back the invaders and punish their temerity by defeat. We have brought our banners to be blessed by your pious lips, before they are unfurled, and our hearts will be strengthened, as by the sound of a trumpet, when thus assembled we have heard the holy service of our church, though no canopy but that of heaven is above our heads, and no walls but mountains here encompass us.

“Heaven will guard you, my son,” cried Father Paul, as he elevated, high above his head, a crucifix he had drawn from his bosom, “The Lord careth for the just man, and he who in his utmost need puts trust in him. We will implore his blessing!” and falling on his knees, with clasped hands and upturned countenance, he prayed in a full and earnest voice.

Aloys Reding and his followers all knelt in

deep devotion, before him, and with heart and voice joined in his orisons. It was a solemn scene, of which the moral grandeur seemed wildly to assimilate with the vast forms of nature, rising around like silent witnesses to these pious men, of the measureless strength of that power they invoked.

When this brief prayer was ended, two priests, who had been summoned from the mountain chapel, joined Father Paul in the celebration of mass; and the bell was rung, and the Host was raised, and religion lent her sanctifying aid to strengthen and confirm the courage of the rugged patriots. Then banner after banner received the Hermit's blessing, ere he unfurled it on the breeze, and restored it to the hands of the Bannerets. Last of all the flag of Schwytz, was given to Aloys Reding, with a solemn benediction by Father Paul.

"The safety of Switzerland depends on you alone," murmured the old man in a voice audible only to the General, "may the blessing

of heaven be upon you, my gallant friend, not less than on your banner."

"I will die ere it is the spoil of the enemy," the officer returned in the same tone, and he turned and resumed his place at the head of his regiment.

A deep stillness universally prevailed; stern and pious confidence had replaced the former noisy enthusiasm of this patriot band, and as they resumed their march, and wheeled in long succession around the rock, where Father Paul with outstretched arms blessed them with pious fervour as they passed, no sound was to be heard in the valley, save their heavy tread upon the dry, hard ground, the clatter of their various weapons, and the lazy flapping of their loosened banners on the breeze.

At length all vanished amidst the pine woods, and the Hermit was left once more alone. Even the two priests who had assisted in the performance of mass, had followed in the wake of the soldiers.

CHAPTER XI.

" Alas where shall they dwell.

Hark ! hark ! Deep sounds and deeper still
Are howling from the mountain's bosom.

BYRON.

—— the wind

Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows

Began to glitter with the climbing moon."

BYRON.

MANY were the fearful prognostics that during the progress of that day gave warning of the approaching horrors of war throughout the whole Canton of Schwytz, but a noble spirit of resistance, alone animated its inhabitants, and ignorant of the miseries for ever attendant on invasion, their enthusiasm was yet unshadowed either by regret, or apprehension. The excite-

ment was universal, and the shepherds came bounding with wild joy from their mountains, to join the army of Reding, as to a festival. Women in bands flocked to aid the common cause by their labour, and the old lamented with sad hearts, that they could bear no part in the glorious campaign. But not a gun that day was fired.

The French General found sufficient occupation in levying heavy contributions on the wealthy citizens of Lucerne, and Michael Graaf being of essential service in pointing out objects for plunder, was treated with the utmost courtesy by the Generals, to whom he lost no opportunity of ingratiating himself, by the meanest and basest services. His wealth was untouched, and the favour of the invaders, even afforded him many opportunities of increasing it. Yet the old man was miserable. However well he might stand in the estimation of the French, his good name was gone for ever, amongst his fellow citizens, and the despair that made him

reckless of his conduct, deprived its rewards of half their value in his estimation. Nor could he forget Justine. She had long been the single object of his affection, and though at first enraged at her, for appearing against him as a witness on his trial, when his danger was past, he made many excuses for her. He had lost all confidence in those around him, and he lacked her sympathy.

Moreover he had strong misgivings, that notwithstanding the professed friendship of the French, were the extent of his wealth suspected by them, he should in turn be made the victim of their rapacity, and restless and suspicious, before four and twenty hours had elapsed, after the arrival of the invaders, he had fully resolved to emigrate with all speed to some distant country, where his wealth would procure him the deference of those, to whom his history was unknown. But he determined not to go without Justine, for with all his avarice and all his vanity, he shrunk from the idea of dwelling for

the remainder of his life, in a strange land, without the society of one human being whom he had ever known, or loved. For the poor girl's own happiness he cared little ; he scarcely thought of the misery she might be exposed to, if left with the mountaineers during the approaching conflict ! it was his own feelings alone he sought to gratify, and his hatred of Walther Stanz, had a large share in his prompt resolution to exert his present power for the recovery of his fugitive niece.

But it was past sunset before his plans were fully matured, and long before he attempted their execution, the Swiss army under the command of Aloys Reding, fatigued by the labours of the past night and day, had lain down to repose upon their arms, and no signs of war remained in valley, or on hill, save the watch fires, that at intervals threw their lurid light, over rock and forest.

Peace seemed to have resumed her empire, and as midnight approached, all appeared wrap-

1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

But his speech was all in vain, for in the latter
circumstances he found it empty. Even Frier
the poor fellow was gone away, and there was no
chance of his having been recently occupied,
save the flying soldiers on the march. For a
moment he feared he had come too late to
meet the messenger he desired: but remem-
bering his own swiftness of foot, he was soon
satisfied that this apprehension was unfounded.
But his fears were not allayed: many other
evils might have happened to occasion the ab-
sence of his sister and her family from her
home at such an hour, and thinking it possible
that alarmed by the proximity of the enemy,

who in scattered parties had been all day ravaging the country, they might have sought shelter and protection at the Hospital, he determined to proceed thither without further delay; yet his heart shrunk from the undertaking.

Hans was not a superstitious man, but he was far from courageous, and though by dint of walking at full speed, he had contrived to reach the chalet with tolerable composure, by a path, with which he was well acquainted, the matter was now much changed.

He discarded the idea of spirits with becoming contempt, but he could neither forget that the French were at Lucerne, nor that marauding parties might be abroad by night, as well as by day, and he trembled in every limb, when the leaves of a solitary tree were shaken by the wind, or the rolling pebbles his own footsteps displaced, went clattering amongst the rocks. He expected every moment to see the flash of a

rifle, or some tall figure in the French uniform, start up to intercept his way.

But his fears were all groundless, no signs of life were on the mountain, even the goats had been driven away by the peasantry, and secured in less accessible folds; yet he knew that this tranquillity could not be of long duration, and he quickened his steps accordingly.

The stars were out, and the night cloudless, so that though the moon, being past the full, had not yet arisen, he could discover the little clustered buildings of the Hospital, lying dark in the ravine at his feet, for sometime before their outline was distinctly visible. He was beginning to be weary, and rejoiced in the prospect of repose they afforded, even if Lena were not there to be found, when all his terrors were renewed by the distant apparition of four figures, slowly descending the path he followed, at only a short distance before him.

His first thought was, that he had yet time to run away.

"If they are soldiers it will be no discredit to run from four such blood-thirsty fellows," he considered. "I hate a Frenchman with all my soul, particularly with a gun in his hand. Yet now I see better, those cannot be soldiers either. I could swear, even at this distance, there are two of them in petticoats, and who knows, but they may be Lena and Justine after all. That is Father Paul's voice, and that is my sister's, sure enough; heaven be praised!" he exclaimed, when pausing for a moment he distinctly heard the conversation of those below.

He lost not a moment in calling far louder than was necessary, for the little party to stop till he came down to them, and, at the same time increasing his speed, he quickly overtook his friends. "I am glad I have found you," he cried, "and that you are all safe out of the Chalet, for there is no time to be lost."

"What mean you?" inquired Father Paul. "I heard only at sunset that the enemy will not advance from Lucerne till to-morrow."

"Then I suspect they have changed their minds," returned Hans without relaxing his pace, "and at all events the men have full liberty to plunder where they please. They have been out in parties all day, driving in cattle from the other side of the Lake. Many a poor girl is left to-night without a cow to milk, and moreover Father Paul, you know as well as I, there are shrewd Swiss, who will not let slip such an opportunity to take revenge upon their private enemies. A foreign army covers a multitude of native sins. Eh, Holy Father, what think you of Michael Graaf?"

The Hermit started.

"What of Michael Graaf?" he inquired in a low, anxious voice.

"He has lost his character, and that he cannot help; the more is the pity," answered the tailor, "for he cannot easily purchase a new one. He has lost his niece, and though most men might think that a less serious concern, he

is more impatient under it, for it is more easily remedied."

"By what means?" demanded the Recluse.

"By getting her back into his clutches," was the reply.

"No! no!" exclaimed Justine who had anxiously listened to this brief dialogue. "Nothing shall ever tempt me under his roof again, unless he were dying, and sought my forgiveness."

"I dare say not," returned Hans, in his usual squeaking, careless tone, "when a young maiden has a handsome lover, it is most likely she prefers his company to that of a cross grained old uncle. But don't be afraid, he won't trouble himself to tempt you!"

"Then what have I to fear?" demanded the girl, who did not like the tone of his speech.

"Force!" answered Hans abruptly. "He has the whole French army at his disposal; he has bribed the scoundrels with other men's

gold ; he has thrown dust in their eyes, and for a week at least, he may do what he pleases in Lucerne. But it shan't be my fault if they do not find him out by that time, and in the meanwhile, you, for once, have got out of his trap."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the whole party in a breath.

"That Michael Graaf intends this very night to lead a party of soldiers to Lena's chalet, for the arrest of Justine. How I learnt this is no matter, but you know, Father Paul, I am very cunning at making out secrets ; and moreover," he added, "I would advise both you and Walther, to take care of yourselves, for he has not forgiven you. But it seems as if you had been warned of all this, before I reached you !"

"We have neither heard, nor suspected anything," returned Lena, "but it is well you overtook us, Hans, or we might have returned without fear to the chalet, when our work was done."

"But whither go you?" was the rejoinder.

"To the Chapel of our Lady," was the brief reply.

"What in the name of all the Saints, are you going to do in such a place at midnight?"

"To celebrate a wedding," was the Hermit's answer.

"And Walther Stanz is waiting for you? ~~is~~ now I understand it all. Ah, Father Paul, there is no disputing, you are an overmatch for Michael Graaf; and for my part, I shall be his equal too, in some points, when I can rub my hands and call the Fraulein Justine my niece. He may be as proud as he pleases, but that is his greatest honour after all. But are the candles lighted? is the priest ready? for ~~egad~~ we must make haste, or he may chance to give us his company unbidden at the wedding. Look, look, Lena! Surely those lights are moving round your chalet! There are figures too! I see them plainly on the edge of the mountain, between us and the sky."

"Look, Father Paul, look!" murmured Justine, laying her hand on the Hermit's arm, "what he says is but too true!"

"They are burning my poor dwelling!" exclaimed Lena, wildly clasping her hands, as a thin, spiral flame shot up from its wooden roof. "My husband's home—my child's birth-place—why am I not there to stifle the flames!"

"Woman, are you mad!" cried Father Paul, grasping the shepherdess by the arm, as with a wild start she seemed about to rush towards her blazing chalet. "Rather rejoice you are not there, to perish likewise, and return thanks to the benignant providence, that has so marvelously rescued you from death."

But poor Lena, deaf to the Hermit's consolation, continued to lament aloud in accents of the wildest distress, as wider and broader the flames enveloped the whole of her humble, but much loved dwelling-place.

"Alas, alas," she cried, "I have no longer where to lay my head, nor a home for my old

age; the labours of my life are gone like a dream, and my poor helpless child left destitute," and she stood still and wept bitterly.

"Lena, for shame! I thought you had been a wiser woman," said her brother, though he was not unmoved by the mother's natural grief, "you have plain proof there is not a moment to be lost, yet here you stand lamenting by the way side, and staring like Lot's wife, at the ruin you have escaped."

"Ah, Hans, but mine was the home of innocence," returned the afflicted woman. "My husband dwelt there—my child was born there, and there I hoped to have laid down my head in peace. But my feet shall no more cross its threshold, and when the morning sun arises, it will be a heap of dust and ashes."

"Such will be many dwellings besides thine, ere another week has passed over this distracted country," said the Hermit solemnly. "But tears will nothing avail, and the ways of the Lord are his own. The Lord giveth and the

Lord taketh away. Without trials there would be no triumph for the christian. Though affliction may surprise us, it behoves us to remember our duties. Recollect, Lena, wherefore we are here, and come without further delay to the chapel, or we must hasten thither, and leave you alone to watch the progress of the flames."

"Ah, yes, the Chapel! I had forgotten!" she replied. "Walther will be there, and Walther never yet deserted me, either in sorrow or in need," and without opposition, she suffered herself to be led to the holy building.

Justine meanwhile had scarcely spoken. Wild and tumultuous were the thoughts of her young heart; half anguish—half delight, half fear—half hope, and joy, as she strove to realize to herself the idea of the approaching ceremony. Even when she entered the Chapel and saw the candles lighted on the Altar, and Father Paul standing at her side, she could not persuade herself to feel as if she had come thither to be married—to be united by the in-

insoluble bonds of wedlock, to Walther Stanz, her early playmate—her long loved Walther. She felt as in a dream. But she spoke not; her agitated feelings were too changing for words to have expressed them, nor did she wish to do so. She thought only of Walther.

Yet her lover was not there, and perplexed and anxious, she leaned trembling against a pillar, and drooped her head upon her breast.

The tall tapers threw their flickering light on the young bride, the Hermit and their anxious companions gathered in a cluster at the foot of the steps leading to the altar, on which they burned, but though their rays pierced to every cranny of the little white-washed building, not a living creature was there to be seen, save themselves. Father Paul kept his eyes anxiously fixed on the open door, through which Lena continued to watch, with sorrow, the destruction of her blazing dwelling; and the deep silence of suspense had become oppressive when the clock of the Chapel struck the first

hour of the new born day. But no Walther appeared. The flames on the mountain grew fainter and fainter, yet still the bridegroom came not.

Hans at times went forth to listen, but no approaching footsteps were audible, only the shouts of the soldiers around the burning ruin at times reached him, till at length another deep, hollow, sullen sound, of yet more fearful import, rolled at intervals on the air. It was the long reverberation of a distant and almost incessant discharge of guns.

The Hermit, as he listened to it, thought with increased anxiety of the prolonged absence of Walther, and, troubled and alarmed, he gazed alternately at Justine and the dying fire on the mountain, as if uncertain what course to pursue. The poor girl betrayed no impatience; she did not utter a word; but she wept bitterly, for she felt, even more deeply than Father Paul himself did, that nothing but death, or a battle in which he must be momentarily

exposed to it, could that night have made her lover fail in his appointment. The possibility of blaming him, or suspecting his truth, never for one moment flashed on her mind, and relying with confidence on his unalterable constancy she trembled with apprehensions for his danger.

More than an hour passed in this dreadful suspense, yet still the same hollow sounds of war continued at intervals to roll amongst the mountains, and though Father Paul forbore to communicate his thoughts, he truly divined the cause of Walther's delay. Poor Lena's grief for the destruction of her cottage was at length entirely engrossed by her yet deeper anxiety for her son, and she was scarcely conscious that the exhausted flames had ceased to throw their red glare on the sky, and the figures that lit it, had disappeared, when the Hermit suddenly exclaimed that he heard steps ascending to the chapel.

All the party except Justine instantaneously rushed to the door, but her strength failed, and

she clung trembling to the rails of the altar. Anxiously did she listen for Walther's well known voice to dispel the fears that chilled her heart; but she heard it not, and the exclamations of Lena and Father Paul soon sufficed to convince her that her hopes were but a dream.

"Brother Ambrose!" cried the Hermit, when after a few moments of anxious expectation, he recognised in the approaching figure one of the priests who had assisted at the performance of mass that morning, "what has sent you back from the army at such an hour?"

"Alack, alack, I am out of breath! I am half famished," returned the panting monk, with a pause to take breath between every phrase. "It was a prompting of the evil one of a surety, that made me ever go thither I have not broken my fast since we parted, and there are such doings down yonder below Arth! such doings! don't you hear the guns? there they are again; boom—boom—boom—every time I

hear them, I feel as if a bullet went through my brain."

"Have the French attacked our people?" inquired Father Paul anxiously.

"Oh yes, the French—nothing but the French; there are myriads of them. It is no use resisting them—they are like the plague of Locusts. Brother Bernard found a musket somewhere; how he could meddle with the tool of Satan I know not, but though I warned him he would have to do penance, he would fire, in spite of all I could say. For my part, I thought I had better come back as fast as I could, and implore the assistance of our Lady, for without that, or some miracle in our favour, every Swiss that does not run away, must be killed before morning, for they are not one to ten, and those French move in long lines like a mower's scythe, cutting down our people like grass; flash, flash, went their guns from one end to the other, and at every flash a bullet flew into some brave fellow's heart. I thought at one time I

had not a whole bone in my skin, but I prayed stoutly, and thanks to my patron Saint, I don't believe now I have so much as a scratch about me," and the poor monk began most anxiously to feel his little fat person from head to foot, to be more fully assured of the miracle performed in his favour.

"Saw you anything of Walther Stanz?" demanded Lena; and Justine pressed anxiously forward to hear his reply.

"Walther Stanz! what should I know of him in such a din and hubbub as that? I was puzzled enough to know anything about myself."

"But did you never see him in the battle?" inquired the girl.

"Perhaps I might, if it had not been pitch dark," returned the monk; "but yes—yes—now I remember, when I was close beside one of the watch fires, he stepped in between me and a great French grenadier. The fellow was six feet at high at least—yes, I remember, his bayonet was within an inch of my breast—I

had given myself up for lost, but I prayed to our Lady—she never deserts her servants at a pinch, and in popped Walther Stanz, sure enough. Yes, yes, so he did ; it was the greatest piece of luck that ever befel me !”

“ But what happened then ?” cried Justine.

“ By the Saints I cannot say exactly ! either Walther killed the Frenchman, or the Frenchman killed him, but which it was, to save my life, I could not tell.”

“ Surely you would remember if he fell,” she rejoined.

“ In truth I was not permitted to see,” said Brother Ambrose, “ for though my legs are somewhat shorter than other peoples, and little accustomed to violent exercise, I never knew anything more about the matter, till I found myself, all on a sudden, more than a mile from the battle. It was a miracle of a surety, and if I had not still heard the guns going boom—boom, I should have esteemed the whole conflict only an illusion of the evil one, for my

head was still spinning round like a top. But alack, alack, it is all true, and but for our Lady's mercy, we shall have these blood thirsty fellows all here cutting our throats before sunrise. Alack, alack, that ever I should have lived to see the day!" and overcome with fatigue and terror, the poor monk sunk on his knees before the altar, and began dropping his beads with the utmost velocity.

Intense emotion for awhile kept the remainder of the party silent. Father Paul, with his arms folded on his breast, gazed with sorrow on the weeping Justine, whilst his troubled thoughts wandered to Walther Stanz and the battle field, grief for the troubles of his afflicted country, mingling with his anxiety for his beloved pupil.

But there was one of the party whom no apprehension of distant evils could ever abstract from his care for present safety; and that was Hans Brunk. He thought it very likely that resistance to the invaders would soon be proved

useless; he thought it more than likely, that some of the victorious marauders would find their way to the Hospital before morning, but he felt quite certain that Michael Graaf would lose no time in pursuing his search for his niece, and he considered every moment they lingered in the chapel, to be exposing her needlessly to danger. He went out to listen—all appeared still in the surrounding solitude, but his fears were not removed, and wondering how a wise man like Father Paul could continue to linger, when no chance existed of the arrival of the bridegroom, he proceeded boldly to remind him that they had better seek a safer asylum.

“It is what I was myself about to propose,” said the Hermit, “only I am uncertain whither we had best direct our steps, for should the French prove victorious, the whole valley of Goldau will be at their mercy.”

“Say rather Switzerland!” rejoined Lena.

“You speak truth,” returned Father Paul solemnly, “and though we may seek to fly

from individual vengeance, we can no where escape the calamities of our land. We will descend the mountain therefore with all speed."

"We shall reach the first house in the meadows before daylight," said Hans, "and as I have made all the coats of the family for the last thirty years, I have no doubt they will give us a breakfast."

"So be it," returned Father Paul. "Justine my child—dry your tears, though your hopes are now disappointed, forget not that when the night is saddest and darkest, yet joy cometh in the morning, to the patient and faithful. Lean on me, my poor girl, for the way is steep," and taking her hand, he gently drew her arm through his, and led her towards the door.

Overcome by words of kindness, Justine gave a free vent to her tears; but she wept not for herself, and could she have felt sure that Walther was in safety, the delay of their marriage, would have been a trifling sorrow. Unresistingly she accompanied the Hermit, for

though at every personal risk, she would fain have lingered there till morning, in the fond hope that Walther might at length arrive, she had not courage to oppose the commands of one of whom she habitually stood so much in awe.

Lena followed with her poor dumb boy, casting many a sorrowful glance to the side of the mountain, where her home had been.

“And what is to become of us poor monks?” ruefully exclaimed Brother Ambrose, seizing the tailor by the skirts of the coat, as he was about to quit the chapel.

“You must stay with our Lady of the Snows to be sure,” replied the little man endeavouring to release his garment, “no doubt she will take good care of you.”

“But Brother Paul is away—and Brother Andrew has not come back from Schwytz, and I shall be here by myself; all our provisions have been sent to the camp, and if no pious soul bring me a fresh supply—”

“Then you must starve, that’s all!” said the

tailor coolly. "But don't be uneasy about that, friend Ambrose, the French will kindly come to settle your destiny before fasting has made you a pound lighter, depend upon it."

"You don't say so!" cried the terrified monk.

"I do! and moreover I think it too, so a merry breakfast to you, Brother Ambrose, for I warrant it will be your last."

"You can't mean it!" was the sole reply of the poor man, from whom Hans vainly strove to escape.

"Come, come sir, this won't do!" cried the tailor releasing himself with a jerk; "go to your prayers. Our Lady never fails to help her friends at a pinch, you know."

"But I can't pray, friend Hans, and I am not going to stay here to be starved, or may be shot by those rascally French. I will not be left all alone in this dismal place, and I will go with you, or by the Saints you shall stay and keep me company," and with dogged resolution he followed Hans into the open air.

CHAPTER XII.

"Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,
And something like a pathway, which the torrent
Hath wash'd since winter. Come, 'tis bravely done.
You should have been a hunter. Follow me."

BYRON.

THE moon was shining brightly, when Brother Ambrose and the tailor left the Hospital, and turned down the path leading to Goldau. Lena and her companions were already out of sight, beyond a turn in the path, and Hans, impatiently chiding the monk as the cause of his being left in the rear, repeatedly urged him to quicken his pace.

Grumbling and murmuring, they had not advanced far when loud shouts echoed through the ravine, and before they could give utterance to their terrors, they beheld Father Paul rush from behind a broken bank with Justine in his arms, and dart at full speed towards the chapel, whilst close behind him, followed a figure in pursuit, and then another, and another, in such quick succession that escape appeared impossible.

But neither Hans nor the monk thought of rendering him the least assistance, nor did they so much as pause for a moment to ascertain his fate. By a simultaneous impulse, without uttering a syllable, they both turned, and darting behind the shadow of a neighbouring rock, fled in an opposite direction.

The Hermit meanwhile, by exertions of which only his mountain life could have made an old man capable, kept in advance of his pursuers. Forsaking the ordinary path, when the foremost of the party was close at his heels

he sprang at one bound over the swollen torrent of the Aa, and, whilst his baffled enemies were yet at fault, rushed away, like a hunter when the game is started, over rock and fissure. The flash of a firelock was for a moment reflected on the turgid water, and then the mountain echoes caught the quick report of a musket and repeated it, again and again, as if two files of soldiers kept up a rapid discharge against each other, from the opposite sides of the valley.

An eagle startled from its roost, flew up screaming in the moonlight; a sound more awful than the hollow thunder that aroused it, and then, even amidst that wild commotion, Father Paul heard a voice that to his ears was yet more ominous than either. It was that of Michael Graaf; harsh, grating, and unnatural—strained far beyond its power, till it more resembled the shrieking of a demon than the cries of a human being. Yet he knew it, and like a spell it restored his nearly exhausted strength,

and redoubled the velocity of his slackened movements.

“Confusion! did I not command, no shot was to be fired,” it exclaimed. “A hundred crowns to him who takes the fugitives alive!”

Money—money—money—was ever the force on which Michael Graaf relied for accomplishing all things in this world! it was always uppermost in his own heart, and perhaps he was not wrong in believing that in a corrupted society, it is almost omnipotent. But it is utterly helpless against nature; against the determined will of a man who despises all it can procure, or against the gentle feelings of a devoted heart, that only values gifts that money is insufficient to bestow!

Money indeed lent speed, and energy, and perseverance to the agents of the Treasurer, but Father Paul had a higher inspiration and mere human strength was as powerless to arrest him, as it would have proved to stay the

eagle that wheeled in wild circles above his head. Even the drooping form of Justine, who half insensible clung with the convulsive grasp of terror to her supporter, seemed scarcely a check upon his movements, and well acquainted with every track upon the rugged mountain, he had greatly the advantage of his pursuers, who were not only ignorant of the district, but unaccustomed to traverse such difficult and precipitous paths, nor could Michael Graaf's repeated and increasing promises of reward, long excite them to keep up the rapid pace with which they had commenced their pursuit.

The Hermit was in his own region! the giant forms of nature were his fortress, and the mighty rocks that impeded the progress of his enemies, familiar to his steps, were his ramparts and barriers of defence!

He knew it was vain to seek refuge at the summit of the mountain, whence immeasurable precipices would preclude all further flight,

and making a sudden turn whilst the soldiers were still on the opposite side of the torrent, he darted down the ravine along the steep side of the bank, where it seemed that scarcely the foot of a chamois could have clung. The movement was instantaneously perceived. Repeated shouts burst on the air; he heard the splashing of the waters beneath him, and in spite of Graaf's prohibition, another gun was fired. But he never turned his head. On, and on, he went; leaping, running, or sliding down the precipices by turns, towards the dark pine wood that covered the lower valley. He knew if he could once gain its shadows, no step could track him amidst its labyrinths, and thither with an ever increasing impetus, he pressed forward with the might of his whole soul.

But though his spirit was indomitable, he began at last to feel that time and sorrow had somewhat shorn him of his strength. His burthen seemed to wax heavy in his arms,

once, whilst on the very brink of a precipice, he missed his footing, and he tottered for a moment over the frightful abyss that yawned beneath; not only the voices, but the very steps of his pursuers were audible; he felt they gained rapidly upon him, but still he looked not, the wood was before him only a few paces distant, the dark pines spread their impenetrable shadows like a grave to welcome him; there, he knew no step could trace him, and that buried in its deep recesses, he should be safe for a time, from the pursuit of the wicked, as in the last asylum of misfortune.

Not two paces divided him from the forest; the tall trees seemed to wave their dark arms on the night wind, to give him welcome, and all other sounds were lost in the rustling and groaning and crackling of these old children of the mountain, as the wind went howling over their summits, when an iron grasp seized the shoulder of the Hermit, and a harsh and exulting voice proclaimed him a prisoner.

The old man turned—he was in the gripe of a French grenadier ; three others were coming rapidly upon them, but he did not lose his presence of mind. He knew that the destiny of Justine and Walther Stanz depended upon that moment, and ere his captor's cry of triumph had expired, he snatched a dagger from his girdle, and plunged it to the hilt in his side.

The soldier fell with a heavy groan, and Father Paul clasping his arms around Justine, plunged at one bound into the recesses of the forest.

For a time the report of musketry, and the shouts of his enemies, followed him as he fled ; but at length all died away, and nothing broke the stillness of those trackless wilds, but the fall of his own footsteps on the withered leaves ; the very winds seemed to have gone to rest, and nature to have found complete repose. The Hermit then at length ventured to slacken his pace, though he still continued his way.

The moon only at intervals pierced the thick

foliage, yet it was marvellous with what skill he directed his steps, between the tall pillars of the forest aisles, and ere the grey light of dawn had glided from the summits of the mountains into these deep retreats, he had trodden many a difficult pass, and stood on the brink of a huge mass of rock, from whence all further progress seemed impracticable.

Amidst the ivy and trailing brambles that half concealed its surface, Father Paul nevertheless found a path, and placing his feet in certain cavities of the stone, known only to himself, he descended with Justine in his arms by this rugged stair, to a little grassy platform that, embosomed in foliage, lay like a nest at its base.

Here, for the first time, he ventured to arrest his steps, and laid down the exhausted maiden on a bed of dried leaves the winds had gathered.

A cold dismay filled the heart of the Hermit as he gazed on the poor girl, who, though not

insensible, yet utterly helpless, lay like a crushed flower. He brought water in a broad leaf from a cavity in the rock; he held it to her lips, and when she had greedily swallowed it, with a deep sigh she again sunk back upon her rugged couch.

Long and anxiously did he continue to watch beside her, and though convinced at length that she had sunk into a deep slumber, Father Paul sought no repose.

When the slant rays of the rising sun fell athwart that grassy nook, he was still there, kneeling by the side of the maiden. His head was bowed upon his clasped hands, his long white beard swept his bosom, and he prayed at intervals in a deep, sad, solemn voice; then again he suddenly relapsed into profound silence as if he had forgotten the words of the orison, which he had half recited.

The past, the sad and shadowy past, the world in which he habitually lived, though awhile forgotten during the hurried incidents

of the night, was again before him ; and when Justine at length awoke from her slumber, and her eyes met his wild and mournful gaze, her heart grew chill beneath its power. She felt that he had heard some fearful tidings, yet her palsied tongue refused to question him ; she could only murmur the name of Walther.

“ Ay, Walther ! who knows what may have befallen him,” he returned, rather as if continuing the train of his own thoughts, than addressing his companion. “ I have heard the report of guns even until morn, ever nearer and nearer, and doubtless Aloys Reding has been driven from his position, and pursued by the enemy into the very bosom of our mountains.”

“ Let us hope better things,” said Justine though her eyes filled with tears, and she sighed deeply as she spoke.

“ Poor child,” answered the Hermit, “ hope if thou canst, whilst yet thy heart is young, the time soon comes when the song of the

charmer can no more beguile; it has long ceased to allay my sorrows, and in truth I would fain learn some certain tidings of the night's conflict, for my heart hath sad misgivings of evil."

"And yet for my sake you tarry here, Father Paul," said the girl, who had arisen from her bed, and seated herself on a fallen pine tree, "But go—go—I entreat you. Nobody will harm me—nobody can discover me here! if the disasters you dread have happened, there will be great need of your wise counsel to direct our people."

"I cannot leave you here to perish," replied Father Paul, "yet to attempt to take you with me in your present exhausted state is impossible."

"Holy father," she returned, "I pray you think not of such a worthless being, as I am. I already owe you more than my life can repay, and must no longer encroach upon your kindness at a time like this. If our army is dis-

persed, your voice alone will suffice to recall the Swiss around their banners; if Aloys Reding is slain, who but yourself will be obeyed by the disheartened troops, and if Walther Stanz is either wounded, or a prisoner, you, and you alone, have the power, and the will to assist him! Oh, go, I implore you go Father Paul! every moment you tarry with me appears an age, when I think how needful may be your presence elsewhere."

"But my return may be prevented," he rejoined, "and I have no food here to give you, Justine! no, no, say what you will, I cannot leave you to perish!"

"Wherefore should I not descend to the valley with you," she persisted. "I am strong now, and no doubt, Michael Graaf, by this time, has returned to Lucerne. Perchance I may find Lena, and her boy again."

"Poor child," said Father Paul, "you know not what you ask. If the enemy has forced the pass, the valley is no place for thee, and to

rejoin our troops alive, I shall have paths to traverse, no female foot could tread."

"Then leave me! there is no danger of my being discovered here, and before sunset you will send or come again."

"No, Justine, that cannot be," said the Hermit, "but this I will do; I have food in my cavern, and though after the pursuit of last night, I durst not take thee thither, I will venture there myself, and bring it thee. I shall not be two hours absent. From the heights I can ascertain if the banners of France, or Switzerland, are flying in the valley of Goldau, and shall then know better, what course is advisable for us to pursue. I promised Aloys Reding to join him at dawn, and do not deny, that I am unwilling to remain here inactive, when my country has such earnest need of the zealous services even of the humblest of her children. My absence will be brief, and heaven guard thee till my return."

"I will not move from this spot, till I see you again, Father Paul," answered Justine, and the Hermit having once more assured her, that she was in perfect safety, as none knew the way to her hiding place but himself, again ascended the secret stair, and disappeared amidst the hanging woods above.

For a time Justine continued to listen to the rustling of the underwood he disturbed in his progress, with that vague and listless misery, that frequently follows intense emotion; but when those sounds ceased, the image of Walther Stanz, which was rarely absent from her mind, returned to engross her whole thoughts. The bright hopes she had indulged whilst hastening at midnight with Father Paul to the Chapel, contrasted sadly with her present forlorn position, and exhausted by fatigue and distress of mind, she felt as if the happiness of her life was blighted for ever; that the marriage she had fondly believed on the point of celebration, was destined never to take place,

and that even if her lover still lived, misfortune after misfortune would arise, to divide them for ever from each other, in this world of woe.

By turns she prayed, by turns she wept, and then again she anxiously strove to calculate the length of the Hermit's absence by the progress of the sunbeams on the rock. She was thus employed, when she was startled by distant voices ascending the defile, but loud and harsh, they bore no resemblance to that of Father Paul.

For a few minutes she was alarmed, but then remembering how far all sounds were audible in that still solitude, she endeavoured to persuade herself that the speakers, whether French, or Swiss, would pass on without discovering her hiding place. Nevertheless she was soon distinctly and fearfully aware, that they rapidly drew nearer and nearer, and the deep barking of a dog, every minute echoed louder and louder through the woods.

A new terror seized her, and as the harsh

growl of a blood hound approached her retreat, she started up and for an instant meditated flight, but the next moment remembering her promise to the Hermit, she determined to abide by it, whatever might be the consequence.

Pale, trembling and dismayed, she stood with clasped hands and eager gaze, wildly listening to the shouts and footsteps as they drew nigh. There were two men, and she distinctly heard them speak the language of her country, but this afforded her no comfort, for the voice of one brought terrible recollections to her mind. It was too remarkable to be mistaken, and as if to increase her terror, they paused immediately beneath the spot where she stood, and consulted as to the direction of their course.

They speedily determined to ascend to the cavern of Father Paul, in search of the gold they appeared convinced he had there concealed, and the fears of Justine were for a

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study. It highlights the need for a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The second part of the paper describes the methodology used in the study. It details the data collection process and the analysis techniques employed. The third part of the paper presents the results of the study. It discusses the findings and their implications for the field. The fourth part of the paper concludes the study and provides recommendations for future research.

The study was conducted using a mixed-methods approach. It involved both quantitative and qualitative data collection. The quantitative data was collected through a survey of 100 participants. The qualitative data was collected through interviews with 10 participants. The data was analyzed using statistical software and thematic analysis. The results of the study show that there is a significant relationship between the variables studied. The findings suggest that the study has important implications for the field. The study also identifies areas for future research.

The study was conducted in a controlled environment. It involved a series of experiments designed to test the hypotheses. The results of the experiments were analyzed using statistical methods. The findings of the study are consistent with the hypotheses. The study also identifies areas for future research.

tempting to take one of her hands, which she firmly resisted, "who expected to find thee alone, like a dove without its mate, in this wild spot. Why thou art shaking as if it were a Christmas frost; but there is no need, for I mean thee no harm, though I owe thee little gratitude. Down, Wolf, down, sir! the dog shall not hurt thee; and by all the Saints I swear, there is nothing on the face of the earth, I love half so well as thyself. But what dost thou here? will't thou not answer me that simple question—will't thou not speak? Nay, this is cruel, when there is nothing I would not do, even at peril of my life, to give thee a moment's pleasure."

"Then, begone! I pray you only to begone!" was the girl's brief reply, and withdrawing her hands for a moment from her eyes, she cast on him such a glance as would effectually have discomfited any ordinary wooer, but Staffer was proof against such looks.

"Begone?" he repeated with a provoking

laugh, "yes assuredly, but not without thee! I have been searching the woods for you, ever since sunrise, and when at last I have had the good fortune to find you, I should be a fool indeed, to let you slip. I learnt, from a prating old monk, you were last night at the chapel with Father Paul. He told me—"

"And what may be your business with me, sir, that gives you a right to be a spy upon my movements, and hunt me with your blood hounds like a criminal?" demanded Justine, turning suddenly, and fixing on him her full, dark, flashing eyes, with a look of haughty indignation.

Even Staffer was for a moment confused.

"Thou hast a lover, Justine," he began with hesitation.

"Ay—and I glory in it" she replied. "One whose name thou art not worthy to utter! what of him?"

"He was in the battle yesternight," returned the farmer pausing, and for a moment hiding

his features with his hand, as he brushed the hair from his brow; "he was in the battle yesternight—"

"Well, and what of that? all brave men doubtless were."

"And it had been better for some of them to have been tending their goats," he returned shrugging his broad, heavy shoulders, "for many a flock will never see its shepherd again."

"But what of Walther Stanz?" inquired the maiden, in a low, tremulous voice of tenderness, that so inflamed the jealousy of him she addressed, that it was with difficulty he could command his temper sufficiently to reply with assumed composure.

"What if I were to tell thee, that this fine fellow, this peerless favorite of thine, like a low born cur as he is, showed his base blood at the first onset, and no sooner smelt powder, than he took to his heels, and ran off as fast as his legs could carry him."

"I would deny the charge, though you bur-

thened your conscience by calling on every Saint in the calender to witness its truth!"

"But could I prove it?"

"I defy thee!"

"Were I to tell thee then, that this beardless hero, this valorous bondman, this herder of other men's goats, had fought like a second Tell, and died with twenty bullets through his breast, what would'st thou say to that?"

"That I believe it as little! for you would not have delayed so long to tell me tidings of such great sorrow. Your exultation would have been too great for concealment!"

"Say you so, my fair maiden!" retorted Staffer, with a face as red as scarlet, "thou hast a rare spirit, so mayhap when I tell you that Walther Stanz is neither dead, nor disgraced, but most grievously wounded, thou wilt be equally slow of belief, and though moved to pity, when I saw him at the point of death, I forgot our old quarrels, and at his request set out in search of thee, thou wilt still

refuse to come with me, to receive his last blessing !”

“ Oh ! Herr Staffer ! distract me no more,” cried the poor girl wildly clasping her hands, “ but if you have not lost all feelings of pity, tell me the truth, and nothing but the truth.”

“ Confound the damsel, I believe she takes me for a greater liar than the town clock !” cried the farmer; “ I have told you the whole story, and if you won’t believe me, what more can I say.”

“ I pray you bear with me. You have told me so many different stories in a breath, that I know not which to believe. Is Walther really wounded, or not ?”

“ Well, then girl, on the word of an honest man, Walther Stanz had not ten hours of life in him, when I left him this morning in a hut on the lower mountain. What can’st thou say to that ?”

“ That I will go to him with all speed,” cried the girl, utterly forgetting Father Paul; “ oh !

Herr Staffer, why did you not tell me this at once, and I would have lost less time," and she hurried to the edge of the bank, by which the farmer had ascended.

"Justine," he said taking hold of her garments, "whither goest thou?"

"To Walther; where should I go?" was her simple reply.

Staffer stared at her pale and innocent face, with a searching, triumphant look, beneath which her eyes sunk to the ground.

"And where wilt thou find him?" he said with a harsh laugh.

"Will you not tell me?"

"Oh yes, with all my heart, and a pleasant walk thou art like to have thither, my pretty damsel. All the lower passes are swarming with Frenchmen, like ants round a nest in summer, and they are gallants who are keen judges of beauty."

"But they will surely never notice a poor peasant girl," replied Justine.

“They will teach you another lesson, if you venture amongst them alone,” returned Staffer; “but there is no need of that surely, for I and my friend I left in the wood, and my good dog Wolf, are ready to escort you, if you don’t prefer worse company.”

“And you will take me straight to the place where he is to be found,” said Justine raising her soft tearful eyes with a look of doubtful enquiry to the face of the farmer.

“To be sure I will,” he carelessly replied. “Has he not sent me in search of you, and what brought me hither do you think, but the monk’s assurance that I should find you in the woods?”

Justine again looked anxiously at the speaker; under any other circumstances he was a man she so entirely disliked, that she would have scornfully refused his proffered escort; but now, though she feared him as much as ever, she remembered that he was accounted honest, and her eager desire to hasten to Walthery,

mastered every other feeling. She forgot her promise, she forgot her fatigue, her hunger and the imminent danger she was about to encounter, she saw only Walther, her betrothed husband—her idol—her beloved—wounded and dying.

“I will go with you,” she said, and though Staffer took her slender fingers in his, to help her through the brushwood, they no longer struggled in his horny hand, but she followed him with the meekness of a lamb.

For a time there was no other means of descent, but over rugged masses of stone, and broken ground, hung with brambles, and woodbine, and hazel, and the poor girl soon found her strength was little equal to the task she had undertaken; faint and trembling she submitted in patient silence, when Staffer glad of the opportunity, passed his strong arm round her slender waist, and lifted her down the most difficult parts of the pass. He felt her breath upon his cheek, her hair brushed his forehead,

and without an attempt to resist the temptation, he was about to press his lips to hers, when in an instant she was gone! like a wave from a fountain, she had glided from his hold, and springing from the rocks went flying amongst the trees that covered the more level ground beneath.

"Ha! ha! my young mistress, there is still some life in thee!" roared the huge farmer, "but it will not last long, and when thy breath is spent, I shall catch thee without running, I warrant!" and followed by his man Jaques, who had joined him at the foot of the rocks, he continued to advance without at all quickening his pace.

Nor was he mistaken in his calculation, for the exertion Justine had made, was the last triumph of the mind over an exhausted frame, and before many minutes had elapsed, her tormenter again came up with her.

She was resting half fainting at the base of one of the wooden crosses, that marked the

image of the beauty of the Rosamond: her head was thrown back, her eyes were closed, her cheeks as white as marble: one of her arms hung powerless, the other pillowed her brow, and her whole figure betrayed no sign of life save the gentle swelling of her bosom, and the tears that glistened beneath her long, dark lashes. It was a sight to have moved the hardest heart, but Robert Starker both loved and hated her by turns. He could not pity her: it was not in his nature, and he only rejoiced to see that her vengeance worked her entirely at his mercy.

"She shall be my wife after all," he thought as he stood and gazed on this lovely form, "and Michael Graaf shall pay me back my gold, and a good dower into the bargain! Father Paul may be a scholar for ought I know, and Walther Stanz may be better taught than fed, but I will prove a match for both of them yet! but there is neither priest, nor dower to be had here, so we must e'en make the best of our way.

Jaques," he said turning to his companion, "I should not wonder if the girl lacked food!"

"Truly she looks as pale as a nun at the end of Lent," was the reply, "shall I unfasten my wallet?"

"We are as safe here, as we are like to be to-day," said Staffer, "and by my faith, we have been abroad since dawn, and need breakfast. Let us see what thy dame has provided for us."

Before these words were concluded, the peasant had untied a knapsack from his back, and in two seconds, an ample supply of coarse cakes and mountain cheese was spread upon the grass. Jaques then unbound a leathern bottle from his girdle, and handed it with a drinking cup of the same material to his master. But Staffer, for once, thought of another before himself, and turning to Justine, insisted on her swallowing a small portion of the wine ere he proceeded to satisfy his own hunger and thirst.

"By the saints she is half famished!" cried

common path from the Hospital to Goldau, the way was comparatively easy, and the girl strenuously refused all the farmer's offers of assistance ; though he repeatedly addressed her, she maintained the most determined silence, nor did even an exclamation escape her lips, till at length emerging from the woods, the whole valley lay widely spread before them.

It was one of those cold, dreary spring days common to mountainous countries, when the heavy grey clouds completely veil the sun, and the face of nature, and the spirit of man, seem equally oppressed and saddened.

But even the sombre pine forests on the Righi, in that funereal light, were a more cheerful spectacle than the vale of Goldau, which on the previous day seemed a terrestrial paradise, where rich productive gardens around the cottages were intersected with walnut trees and orchards laden with blossom, where the young corn made the upper lands as green as the meadows near the margin of the lake of Zug,

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gular array, hedges of pikes glittering along every rank.

The drum, and the clarion, and the fife, made harsh dissonance with the solemn voice of nature, in these her wild and hallowed haunts, but, as if she scorned the mockeries of man, ever and anon the fall of some far avalanche, the rushing of the torrents, or the crashing thunder of a rock that rolled from its airy pinnacle into the fathomless abyss, seemed to crush all other sounds beneath their might, and the clarion, and the fife, and the drum were silenced by the mighty din of the elements.

The tricoloured flag was flying far and wide, and not less than ten thousand French were stationed between Morgarten and Arth, but to the consternation of Justine, not a single Swiss was visible. Their dwellings were deserted, or consumed; their fields forsaken; and as far as her eye could reach, not a living creature appeared to dispute the possession of the country

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一、政治思想
 二、道德品质
 三、文化知识
 四、身体条件
 五、其他方面

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as they call it, whilst if they had let the French have their own way, matters would have gone smooth enough, and no man the worse for it. But Aloys Reding and Father Paul have stirred up the rebellion, and they are learned men; it always is your learned men who are at the bottom of mischief. Thank the Saints, no learning was ever knocked into my brains, to teach them that black is white, and white black! it always brings a man to ruin sooner or later."

"But where is Walther Stanz?" said Justine, without having heard a single syllable of this long tirade.

"Thou wilt know that soon enough my pretty damsel," he returned, "but come along," and he again continued his way. He carefully avoided the valley, and keeping along the side of the mountain, he traversed the woods by difficult paths, where the solitude and poverty of the land had not yet tempted any of the French marauders to penetrate. Justine followed him without a murmur, only occasionally

breaking silence, to inquire with increasing anxiety for her lover.

More than another half hour had thus passed, when they came suddenly in front of a little chalet, perched like a nest in a narrow recess of the rocks. It was a wretched hovel, deserted and forlorn, yet the poor girl's heart leapt with joy when her conductor, pointing to it, told her they had reached their destination.

Her whole frame trembled with agitation, and no sooner had he pushed open the door, than, eagerly calling on Walther, she rushed into the wretched dwelling.

It consisted only of one room, and that room was empty. Not a trace was there to be seen of any recent inhabitant, and the loud and mocking laugh of Staffer, as he stood on the threshold, at once convinced the wretched Justine how fearfully she had been deluded, and wildly wringing her hands in utter despair, with a faint cry she fell senseless to the ground.

CHAPTER XIII.

Its no in makin muckle mair,
To make us truly blest ;
If happiness has not her seat
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest.
Nae treasures, nor pleasures
Could make us happy lang ;
The heart, ay's the part, ay,
That makes us right or wrang.
BURNS.

THE disappointment of Michael Graaf at the escape of his niece was unbounded, but he was yet more provoked that Father Paul had eluded his power. His soul thirsted for vengeance on the Hermit. He had disliked him from his earliest years, and the part he had acted in the recent trial of Walther Stanz, and his own condemnation, had so roused all the darkest pas-

sions of his nature, that though habitually only merciless when he judged leniency inexpedient, he now, from absolute hatred, longed to effect his destruction. Step by step sin had generated sin, till even his horror of shedding blood was overpowered by the activity of evil in his heart.

In this mood he had offered a large reward for the Hermit's capture, but in vain. The night passed on without the hunters after human blood bringing any food to sate his vengeance; morning dawned, and no trace of the fugitives had been discovered. The cavern of Father Paul was searched; he was not within its recesses; the deserted Hospital was ransacked, but he was not there to be found, and the Treasurer was at length obliged to dismiss his weary followers, without his wishes being accomplished.

But whilst his desire of vengeance was rather aggravated than allayed by disappointment, other feelings mingled wildly in this man's disordered mind.

He had seen whilst in the Hermit's cave, though his companions did not, a large coffer half hidden by the deep shadows of the place. He had trembled at the time lest other hands should rifle it, and now, when all else seemed unattainable, his brain felt absolutely throbbing with his strong desire to ascertain the contents of this mysterious chest.

If his foot had been on the throat of Father Paul, and a dagger in his hand, one feeling could have had power to arrest his vengeance--his visionary affection for the child of his imagination, his longing for an heir to his hard earned wealth, and his eager desire to unravel the secret of its destiny, it might be said of its very existence, which he firmly believed that the Hermit and no other living man could reveal to him. For this he would have spared even the being he esteemed his worst enemy; for this he would have pardoned all his injuries, he would have heaped wealth upon him, he

would have blessed him, and with all the idea of the coffer strangely mingled.

Other men were thinking of the awful crisis of their country's fate; of the fearful progress of the enemy, and the horrors and the ravages of the past night; and their hearts were engrossed by the mighty interests of the passing hour, or by deep anxiety for the approaching calamities that threatened their people. But when his followers left Michael Graaf in the old forest of the Righi, standing alone by the brink of the torrent, though the roll of the enemy's cannon continually broke upon the solitude, no concern for the deep calamities his cupidity had brought upon his country, no repentance for having sent a flaming sword into her peaceful valleys, and slaughter amidst her children, for a moment disturbed his mind. He was thinking only of Father Paul and the mysterious coffer.

Amidst the greatest calamity, and sorrow

apparently the most engrossing, were the truth confessed, there is frequently, some unbidden thought intrudes on the mind of the sufferer, and from the noblest feelings, the loftiest, or the most generous sympathy of which human nature is capable, brings him back to self, and the petty cares of material existence. The mightiest minds have moments of weakness to remind them of their frailty. But when the image of the Hermit's chest arose before Michael Graaf, amidst the vast and solemn grandeur of the mountains, it expelled no nobler ideas from his mind. As we have before said, he was no observer of nature, and though capable of fervent individual attachment, benevolent sympathy with his fellow creatures he had never felt. He cared no more for a Swiss, than a Frenchman; an inhabitant of Paris, or Lucerne, was all the same to him; they were welcome to cut each others throats for anything he cared, provided they neither molested him, nor his property, and so, whilst

the vital struggle was raging around him he thought only of the old black coffer.

Again and again he marvelled what it contained, and though in reality there was nothing extraordinary in Father Paul's having such a possession, he saw in it the deepest mystery. He thought over all he knew of the Hermit's early history, of his strange knowledge of his own former life. The known and the unknown, the true and the imaginary, jostled, and flitted, and mingled with his burning wishes, in wild and perplexing confusion, till in the coffer, and in the coffer only, he was convinced he should find the solution of his perplexing doubts.

With a dark and disturbed mind, he turned to retrace his steps to the cave; yet it was a place he never even thought of without awe, associated as it was with the image of Father Paul, for he feared the recluse, even more than he hated him, and though the Treasurer, except by his hypocrisy, never acknowledged to himself any respect for virtue, there was a lofty

grandeur in the Hermit's pious life that abashed and humbled him. The ghost of his own crimes seemed ever ready at his call to upbraid him with the past, and the very name of his dwelling place, at all times brought a host of such images before his mind.

Yet thither he persevered in going; convinced that from Father Paul himself he had nothing that day to dread, and eager to avail himself of his absence, he proceeded up the mountain with such unwonted celerity, that soon after sunrise he stood on the narrow terrace before the cavern.

It was an oratory, where the Hermit was wont to lift his heart to heaven, in grateful adoration for the prospect of natural sublimity and human happiness displayed in the mountains and valleys it overlooked; but Michael took no note of either.

A little way before him, darted down the chrystal cataract, where the guardian spirit of Father Paul, was wont to appear to him in fair

and shadowy guise, but the waters had no inhabitant for him, and the cascade to his sight was no more than a falling torrent. The one man saw a soul in any thing, to the other, all was matter.

With keener scrutiny, he surveyed the dark recess he was about to enter, for though it appeared as silent and lonely as he had recently left it, he shrunk with his wonted reluctance from the hallowed sanctuary. It was not that he dreaded to find the Hermit there, such a possibility never occurred to his mind, but though the broad sun fell far within the threshold, the thoughts of his own brain made him shrink from advancing.

He sat down on the stone seat at the entrance—he wiped the perspiration from his brow; he looked around on the rocks, the waterfall, the stump of an old tree, as if to convince himself that he was still in his senses; he upbraided himself for his folly, for his terrors; he looked at the sun, and calculated how long it would be

before he could get back to Lucerne ; he watched the evolutions of a French regiment on the plain, and considered how many days the Swiss would be able to continue their resistance ; then he remembered Justine, and the necessity of flying with his ill-gotten wealth within two days at furthest.

Then again he thought of the coffer, of the evidence concerning his child, that must be obtained before his departure, or lost to him for ever, and without allowing time for his former apprehensions to recur, he rushed into the cavern.

For a few moments he could discern no objects in the gloom that pervaded it, but gradually the outline of the old crucifix became visible, with a death's head standing on the missal at its base. Michael crossed himself ; he was no devotee, but to the hardest heart it was an awful and a startling sight to behold those sacred emblems of death and immortality, as the advancing sunbeams at that moment

bathed them in radiance, leaving all beyond ~~in~~ darkness as inscrutable, as the eternity where the glory of the Cross alone is visible as a beacon to the footsteps of man.

His limbs trembled ; the heart of the wicked was moved. For the first time in his life, he felt that though he had prayed, and gone to mass, and given alms, and fasted in due season, confessed and received absolution, there was no hope in heaven for him ; for the first time in his life he felt the spirit of the religion of which he had hitherto regarded only the forms, and he knelt down before the crucifix and wept.

How long he thus remained in a trance of terror, rather than repentance, it would be impossible to say, but the sunbeams had in the meanwhile continued to travel onwards, and when the wretched man again looked up, they shone full on the old black coffer.

Michael started up ; all his fears of the next world were instantaneously obliterated by the recurrence of his habitual cares for this, and

forgetting everything but the object that had brought him thither, he hastened to accomplish his infamous purpose.

But the utmost efforts of his strength were unequal to raise the ponderous lid of the chest, for in addition to its weight, and it was heavily clamped with iron, a massive lock effectually precluded the possibility of opening it. He bruised his hands, he tore his nails in his efforts to force it, but all in vain ; he might as well have attempted to raise the mountain that was piled above his head.

In this dilemma it occurred to him that it was possible the key might be concealed in some part of the cave. It was evidently of large dimensions, and it was not unlikely, that Father Paul instead of carrying it about with him, might think it sufficiently secure in some secret nook of that inaccessible place. He determined at all events to make a search, when if he did not discover the key itself, he might perhaps find some tool to burst open the coffer.

For long he sought in vain, but his zeal lent him patience, and at length to his infinite delight, when he nearly despaired of success, he found a small bundle of dried weeds, thrust into a hole in the rock, and in the middle of this was a huge old key. He flew with it to the box ; it exactly fitted the key-hole ; it turned in the lock without difficulty, and in another moment, with infinite exultation, Michael Graaf raised the ponderous lid.

There was a close, musty smell in the coffer, as if it had not been opened for years, a white linen was closely spread over its contents, and when the sunbeams darted within it, and the Treasurer raised a corner of the cloth, he felt as if he had let the light and air into a long buried coffin, and was raising the shroud from the face of the dead. Yet still he persevered ; no man but himself could know, or divine the powerful feelings that urged him to the scrutiny. But at first he found nothing to fulfil his expectations.

There was a decent suit of male attire, that probably usually worn by Father Paul, when he made long excursions from his mountain home; there was a case of mathematical instruments, and a few books. All these Graaf carefully removed one after another, diligently searching each, to ascertain that no M.S. was hidden amongst them. When this was done, the further contents of the box were concealed by another sheet. The hand of Michael trembled as he raised it; he felt as if an evil demon was crouched upon his shoulder, and grinning triumphantly at his work; yet he persevered.

But no sooner did his eye fall on that which lay beneath, than with a heavy groan he relaxed his hold and clasped his hands in agony. If a spirit had arisen before him from the grave, he could scarcely have been more appalled. Yet there was nothing there to have terrified any other man; it was only the picture of a very fair woman, on which the eyes of Graaf had fallen.

But the woman—those features: what horrible ideas of guilt came into their mind, as they gazed on the image: what images of murder and shame did they not re-awaken. Before he first beheld them, he was guiltless and happy: since they passed, his life had been one series of trial, temptation and terror, and with all his dreams of detection and ignominy both by day and by night, the image of that woman had ever seemed to mingle and to mock his agony.

Though at first utterly overpowered by his unexpected discovery, yet by degrees, when he remembered it was merely a picture, his courage returned. He did not even avert his eyes when he again lifted the covering, but fixed them resolutely on the portrait. The face, though calm and beautiful, was very sad; far sadder than he remembered to have ever seen it. He well knew wherefore, and a deep sigh heaved the bosom of the wretched Treasurer, as he turned his gaze to other objects.

Let no man believe that guilt goes unpun-

ished in this world; it may smile and glitter, but the dagger is meanwhile in the heart, and were its secret agonies revealed, even though they be but momentary, the innocent would shrink with horror from the sad spectacle.

Michael Graaf continued his search, but it was only to multiply his pangs. The next thing he found was the dress of a female. It had nothing remarkable in it, but he knew it at a glance. It was the garment his wife wore, the day he gave her into the power of another. To search further it was necessary to lift it out of the trunk.

Reader, have you ever unclosed the coffers of the dead after they are mouldering in the grave? Do you know their dank and earthly smell? Have you ever dropped tears over the well known attire, you have seen again and again, on one who hath now no need of any but a winding sheet? Have you felt a chill awe creep over you, as you lifted the empty garments, creased and useless, yet each instinct, as

it were, with the face and figure of their former owner? Have you felt as you looked at their quaint, and obsolete fashion, and thought how an immortal creature had delighted in these rags, how vain and worthless is all save love and faith, that perishing mortals value here? Have joyful days, and happy smiles, come flitting before you? Have sweet voices, long hushed by death, sounded vainly on your ears, till you started from the trance to weep over the youth, and joy, and hope, that like the owner of these sad relics, had departed for ever? Reader! even if you have experienced all this, unless you have been the destroyer both of the dead, and of your own happiness, you can form only a faint conception of Michael Graaf's feelings, when he dared with impure hands to touch the garments of the departed Clarice. But he mastered them! He lifted out the various articles of attire, one after another, and laid them on the floor by his side. An overwhelming passion animated his heart, under whose

influence he would have recklessly hurried to the very brink of destruction. At length the work was done; nothing remained in the coffer, but a small leather box. He eagerly seized it. It was not locked, and contained a little paper parcel, carefully sealed on every side.

The iniquitous search of the Treasurer had hitherto been requited only by pain and disappointment, and with anxious impatience he tore off the fastenings of the packet. In it he found two locks of hair—one, long, black and shining; the other, short, curled, and golden, like a wedding ring; one of those bright glittering things that cluster round the head of infancy. They were evidently the relics of a mother and her child. So amazed, so heart stricken was the Treasurer, that several moments elapsed before he saw, that within the paper these words were written in a tremulous, and almost illegible hand, "The hair of Clarice and her child;" but no sooner had he done so, than

with the eagerness of a maniac he seized the golden curl, he pressed it to his lips, again and again, he wept, he raved by turns in rapture and despair; he paced the cave, he returned to the coffer, again he knelt down, and again perused the precious writing, as if he had lost the power fully to understand its meaning. All he knew distinctly was, that he was a father; that the wishes of his life were fulfilled, and Clarice had been a mother before she died. His offspring had lived and breathed; there was its precious ringlet!

Then in a moment flashed on his mind the horrible apprehension, that nothing more remained of it upon earth; or why would that golden curl have been wrapped in the same cover with the dark tress of the dead. It seemed scarcely possible to doubt that the infant and the mother had both gone to the grave. And yet, there was a chance that it was not so! that he might live to discover, to claim and acknowledge his child as his own; that he might yet

be relieved from the agony of loneliness, and not go unlamented to the grave.

Then bitterly and deeply did he curse Father Paul, for having so long concealed the fact. Never once did he think of the love, which had prompted the poor Hermit to retain, as his sole earthly treasure, these worthless remains of the dead; never did he once remember with gratitude, the kindness this holy man had extended to the poor, abandoned victim of his avarice, or the sufferings which it was evident had been entailed on him for life, by his supplanting him in the affections of Clarice! No! when the image of Father Paul did arise before him, it was neither with gratitude, nor pity; but with hatred and jealousy the most intense. It distracted him to think, that whilst he, childless and unloved, had wasted his life in vain researches for his offspring, he would have given half his wealth to behold, this man, the object of his utmost detestation, had been the master of his secret, and the silent witness of his agony.

He envied him even the lock of hair, and forgetting his own dark deeds, he cursed the Hermit repeatedly as the sole creator of his misery. The last person a man accuses is himself!

He returned to the coffer; he again knelt down, and without any of his former reluctance once more turned over its contents, in search of some further evidence of his child's existence. But there was nothing more to be found.

It was evident that from Father Paul alone, could be learnt the tale he thirsted to discover. Various schemes for his arrest passed in his mind; and in the meantime he held the golden curl in his hand; he left the woman's tress upon the ground; it had no value in his eyes; but the infant's hair he folded carefully up, intending to keep it next his heart.

"I have got this at least, from the villain," he murmured, "and though I lavish every farthing I am worth, he shall be caught; the story of my child shall be wrung from his lips, or one of us shall die!"

At this moment there were steps behind him ; still holding the lock of hair, he sprang from the ground, and beheld with speechless amazement, the Hermit himself, striding rapidly towards him, with an expression of lofty indignation in his gestures and movements, and such a flashing light in his deep, dark eyes, that the coward crouched before him to the earth, as he would if he had beheld an enraged lion about to spring upon him.

“ Ha, villian !” cried Father Paul seizing his collar with an iron grasp, “ what hast thou been doing here ! not content with plundering the public treasure-house, hast thou clambered to the cell of the Hermit to rifle his poor stores ? But thou hast been fitly rewarded for thy pains ! callous as thou art, couldst thou presume to touch those garments, to scatter them in the dust ? shame on thee Michael Graaf, shame on thee. A common thief would have more respected them, had he known as thou dost, the delicate being to whom they once be-

longed. And the hair—by all the Saints thou hast not dared to break the seals, to pollute with thy foul fingers that last relic of thy victim? What do I see! the raven lock of poor Clarice, the tress I cut from her pale brow, before I laid her in the grave, trodden beneath your feet! unfeeling wretch—brute—worse than the brute that never had a soul! have twenty years of crime yet taught thee no repentance,” and dashing the Treasurer nearly to the further end of the cave, he knelt down, and pressing the dark hair to his lips, whilst his eyes were dimmed by tears, he kissed it with the utmost reverence.

“Pure angel,” he murmured, “cannot death exempt thee from insult,” and he bowed his head and wept.

Michael Graaf from a dark corner of the cavern watched him intently. At another time he would, with his habitual cowardice, have seized the opportunity to escape, but now he remained patiently watching till the first vio-

lence of the Hermit's emotion had subsided, that he might have a better chance of gaining his object.

For a time Father Paul seemed to forget him and every thing the world contained, save the frail, dry lock of hair in his hand, till suddenly another idea flashed upon his mind. He looked eagerly around, he examined the little box, but he found not what he sought.

"Pitiful scoundrel," he said, then turning towards the Treasurer, "what hast thou done with the fair curl?"

"It is mine! mine for ever!" returned Michael; "it grew on the head of my own child, and by every law both human and divine, it is mine, and mine only."

"Ay, if thou hadst not sold thy wife!" returned the Hermit, in a low, deep voice of scorn, "if thou hadst not driven the fair young innocent thing, that hung for her sole support upon thy love, to seek mercy from strangers, and her daily bread from the hand of charity."

“ But still her child was mine !”

“ It might be so,” was the Hermit’s caustic reply, “ and yet I marvel, Michael Graaf, how such an honorable man can seek to revive the memory of these dark transactions, now Clarice is dead, and I am content to let the whole matter rest in oblivion !”

“ Until now you never acknowledged her death,” returned the Treasurer. “ Father Paul you have cruelly revenged her. Had I been certain of her decease, I might have taken another helpmate, I might have seen other children rising around me, yet whilst you concealed from me, that I was already a father, you robbed me of all these blessings.”

“ Have you deserved them !” answered the Hermit, in a voice that made his listener’s flesh creep upon his bones. “ What have you done that children should cluster round your knees, whilst my hearth is desolate, that their bright laugh should gladden your home, whilst mine echoes only the moaning blast ? what have you

done that love should smooth your path to the grave, whilst mine is rugged and forlorn? Tell me that, Michael Graaf, and tell me why you should expect me, above all men, to be the artificer of your joy? why one on whom you have inflicted every agony that tongue could name, whose love you betrayed, whose hopes you destroyed, whose heart you have broken, should bestow on you even a beam of happiness?"

"By all things sacred, I am ready to swear I never sought to injure you!" said the Treasurer submissively.

"No matter! for my own wrongs I have forgiven them long ago, but listen to me, Michael Graaf. When I first discovered your perfidy in friendship and in love, when poor Clarice pined and died the victim of your heartlessness and sin, I thought all men were villains. I forswore their converse—I buried myself like a savage in these wilds. Time wore away this feeling, and I became again convinced that

there were still kind and gentle hearts upon the face of the earth. But yours was not amongst the number. No! the more I gave credit to human virtue, the more your crimes were magnified, and though Clarice had borne you fifty children, and all had been in my keeping, I would sooner have slain them with my own hands, than have condemned the poor innocents to be trained to iniquity, by a wretch so vile, as I know thee to be."

"But does my child yet live?" persisted Michael, mastering his wrath, "surely, surely, even your vengeance might be sated, by the long years of solitude you have doomed me to."

"I have desired no vengeance," returned Father Paul, "but if you will know more, this I will tell you! when Clarice on her death-bed placed an infant in my arms, she bade me swear, by every saint in heaven, to conceal both from you, and the child, the secret of its birth. 'I would not have it trained in sin,' she said, 'lest the gates of heaven might be closed against it for ever.' Under one circumstance alone, she

gave me permission to reveal the mystery, and that has never happened. I have kept my promise as you know; all entreaties are unavailing, I will keep it to the end."

"This is madness, Father Paul!" said the distracted man. "If I know not my child, in these civil discords, his hand may be against me, and mine against him."

"Then his blood be upon your own head; but how know you it was not a daughter, Michael Graaf?" rejoined the Hermit, with sarcastic composure.

"This is no longer to be borne!" cried the Treasurer pale with rage; "I am alone, Father Paul, so you presume to insult me, but remember, the whole French army is ready to do my bidding. You have sought to prove me a perjurer and a thief, in the eyes of my country; you have torn my niece from my arms, and now you dare openly to boast, that you have robbed me of my own child. It was but lately I had your neck almost upon the block, and by

the mass it shall be there yet, before another week is over, or I will die for it."

"Vain man," replied the Hermit, "well you know, that by one effort of my strength, I could cast you over yonder precipice, to roll a shapeless mass into the torrent at its base; that by one flash of this pistol," and he drew one from his girdle, as he spoke, "I could lay you a corpse at my feet, did I not remember the injunctions of my Redeemer. Get thee gone to thy money bags, poor boasting miser! return thanks that the care of no soul but thine own, has been committed to thy keeping, and rejoice that thou hast this hour to deal with a priest, and not a soldier. But give me that golden curl before thy departure, it is too pure a thing to remain in thy keeping."

"Never!" answered Michael, with a courage derived from the knowledge that his life was in no danger, "if my child is torn from me, this at least shall be mine; and moreover I will not depart till I have learnt whither you have con-

veyed my niece. I presume you have sworn no oath that compels you to make her your prisoner !”

“ Walther Stanz will take good care no ill betides her,” was the Hermit’s laconic reply.

“ Were she with me, she would have no need of such a beggar’s protection,” said the Treasurer.

“ Find her then !” said Father Paul, “ she is no ward of mine.”

“ Deny all knowledge of her if thou wilt,” cried the angry Michael, “ yet I saw her in thine arms last night upon the mountain.”

“ She is free to return to you, whenever she prefers being in your custody,” returned the Hermit calmly, “ but now, Michael Graaf, if you have nothing else to say to me, I should be glad to be left alone ; my time is too precious to be longer wasted in worse than useless discourse.”

“ Traitor ! I know thy plots,” cried Graaf “ and if I had a band of soldiers at my back,

thou shouldst not be free another instant. But thy reign will soon be at an end."

The Hermit laughed aloud.

"Thou hast grown wondrous valiant, methinks, Herr Treasurer," he said, "since I told, thee I was no spiller of blood; but I advise thee to be silent and begone, for there are many in this neighbourhood, who are not likely to be thus lenient."

Scarcely had Father Paul uttered these words, when the sound of numerous and heavy steps was distinctly audible, as if almost at the mouth of the cavern.

Every limb of the Treasurer shook; his pale face turned as livid as a corpse; yet he eagerly waited the result; for it was equally possible for the intruders to be his friends, as his enemies, and if the former, he felt, with malignant joy, that the Hermit was utterly, and inextricably in his power.

CHAPTER XIV.

—— ——— he felt
A gushing from his heart, that took away
The power of speech.

WORDSWORTH.

I think we shall not meet again,
'Till it be in that world, where never change
Is known, and they who love shall part no more.

SOUTHEY,—RODERICK.

THE well known voice of Walther Stanz, calling Father Paul by his name, quickly dispelled the pleasing illusions of Michael Graaf, and, terrified and dismayed, he had scarcely time to crouch into the darkest recess of the cave, ere the young mountaineer, with five stout peasants at his back, all fully armed, appeared upon its threshold. He knew he could not be seen where he lay, and hoping that that the Hermit

might forget his presence, he anxiously awaited the result.

"Father Paul!" exclaimed Walther, "I rejoice to find you here, for we come by the order of Aloys Reding to escort you to the camp with all speed. Twice he sent hither, before dawn, for he has great need of your advice, but you were neither to be seen nor heard of!"

"But you came not at midnight!" returned Father Paul in a tone that sufficiently conveyed his meaning to Walther, without its being necessary to betray their secret agreement to those around.

"Our outposts were surprised only an hour before," he answered, "and our little band of patriots found themselves engaged in the darkness, with nearly the whole French army. Their shot fell on our ranks, sweeping down men like the ripe ears in harvest time; and lives were precious to our country then, as gems in a king's diadem. A little band fought round the banner of Schwytz, till the earth was

slippery with their blood, but no man fled, and when our General at length commanded our retreat, with most unwilling hearts, our army left the field in perfect order. It was then near dawn, and I trust you will no longer marvel, why I came not at midnight."

"All this we imagined, and forgave you," replied the Hermit.

"Went you to the chapel?" was the young man's eager demand.

"I did."

"Alone?"

"Most surely not, and those who waited for you there are safe!"

"Ha! what do I see! a spy,—an enemy is amongst us!" exclaimed Walther, as his eye at that moment caught the figure of Michael Graaf, gliding along amidst the gloom at the opposite side of the cavern.

The Treasurer was already near the entrance and the backs of the soldiers were towards him, so as completely to obstruct the passage of the young

mountaineer, when he endeavoured to rush forward to arrest his flight.

Father Paul, who alone understood Walther's exclamations, had no wish that he should make Graaf his prisoner, and ere the soldiers comprehended what was passing, the old man had effected his escape from the cavern, and was running full speed down the defile.

"Let him go," said the Hermit, "he was not here without my knowledge; and now my friends, when I have replaced the contents of this coffer, I am ready to follow you where ever you please, only this I must stipulate, that one I left waiting for me in the wood below, must be my companion," and with the utmost haste he returned into the old hiding place, all that Graaf had so ruthlessly disturbed; all except the tress of poor Clarice's hair. "I may never live to return," he thought, and whilst no one observed him, he hid that in the folds of his frock.

His task was speedily done, and in less than five minutes after the disappearance of the

Treasurer, Father Paul and Walther Stanz, were hurrying side by side, along the mountain paths, a little in advance of their companions.

The young man eagerly seized the opportunity to enquire after Justine.

"She is safe," replied the Hermit, without thinking it necessary to recount the dangers of the past night, "and it is she whom I am desirous, should accompany us to the camp."

"Is she with my mother?"

"No ! Lena has fled with Fritz, I know not whither, and Justine remained alone, beyond yon point of the rock, whilst I ascended to my cave in search of food for her !"

"Merciful heaven ! alone, Father Paul?"

"Even so !" returned the Hermit calmly.

"She was too feeble to climb the mountain, and I had no choice but to leave her, or see her die of hunger."

"You chill my very heart," said the youth redoubling his speed. "I have heard reports that Michael Graaf is abroad in pursuit of her, and if they be not true, yet such

bands of lawless men are roving like savages in search of plunder, over hill and valley, that I am half maddened to think of the fate that may have befallen her."

"The nook where I left her," replied the recluse, "is far from all the beaten tracks, and I believe known only to myself; yet I would we were there, for I promised to return to her long before this."

Walther made no reply, but he unconsciously quickened his pace, till it was with great difficulty that Father Paul could keep up with the rapidity of his movements. Since he parted from Justine at Lucerne, though his sense of duty had kept him far from her, engaged in the public service, he had never ceased to think of her with the deepest anxiety, and the most impatient longing to behold her. The Hermit's proposition to unite them on the previous night, in the holy bonds of wedlock, had filled his heart with rapture, and though when the shepherds' horns sounded to battle, and the guns of the enemy

broke the stillness of the night, and surprised and nearly surrounded them; the reckless courage of the Swiss army alone saved them from being entirely cut to pieces, he felt that both honor and duty equally constrained him to remain and share the dangers of his countrymen, yet even amidst that wild struggle, the image of Justine was for ever before him. None that night fought more nobly, yet in every pause of battle his heart wandered to the Hospital, and his love inspired his gallant deeds, even more than his long and ardent desire to prove himself worthy of that respect, his humble birth denied him.

During the retreat that followed the conflict no man could give him any tidings of Father Paul; and Aloys Reding felt the greatest surprise that the Hermit should have apparently deserted him, at the moment of danger, when he relied on his holy eloquence, and boundless influence over the peasantry, to infuse new courage and resolution into his broken ranks. Nevertheless, both he and Walther knew the old man too

well to suspect him one moment of treachery, and when the latter heard that Lena and his dumb brother Fritz had been seen flying beyond Lowertz, he felt the deepest apprehensions, not for the Hermit alone, but for Justine. Brother Ambrose, and Hans Brunk, were the next evil messengers; but as they had both taken at once to flight, without staying to ascertain the nature of the attack on Father Paul, they could give no clear account of the affair, and knew not that Michael Graaf had been its instigator. Their narrative, in fact, proved nothing but their own cowardice, and that a detachment of the enemy had ascended the Righi; but it decided Aloys Reding to send, without delay, a party in quest of Father Paul, sufficiently strong to assist him in case of danger; and of this, much to his satisfaction, Walther Stanz was appointed leader. The signs of the devastations of the previous night had filled him with anxiety as he ascended to the cavern, but it was not till he arrived at the spot where the Hermit had left Justine, and found it

deserted, that his agony of mind completely mastered him. All that he had felt till that moment was absolutely composure in comparison; his darkest terrors had been till then chequered by the light of hope, but from thenceforward, there was nothing but evil to expect.

Father Paul himself was utterly dismayed; he remembered with dread how recently Michael Graaf had left his cave, but as he had not been recognised by Walther, he forbore to tell him this, wisely judging it useless to add to his first poignant sufferings. But though neither his religion, nor his judgment, prevented his sympathising with the young man's distress, he remembered the time when passion held the mastery in his own heart, and he forbore to insult his despair, by words of consolation. He waited till the violence of Walther's feelings had somewhat abated, and then pointed out the broken branches, and trodden grass, which marked the side of the wood by which Justine had departed.

Walther, impetuous in all things, eagerly seized on the new hope these traces afforded him, and followed by the Hermit and his companions, pursued the very footsteps of Staffer. At length, when they reached the public path, all decided guide was gone, and Walther no longer advanced with the same confident energy.

But ere long his spirit was revived; he distinctly saw the marks of small footsteps on the soft ground, and at length on the straggling branch of an old thorn, he found a fragment of the maiden's dress. This was at the very corner of the path, which turned from the main road towards the chalet, whither Staffer had conducted her.

At first the little party hesitated which to pursue, but the print of a woman's foot again directed them, and directed them aright.

In a very brief space they too arrived at the deserted hovel. But to enter it was impossible. It was one mass of fire. The roof, already consumed, had fallen in; the flames curling and

hissing around the dry timbers of which it was composed, threw a frightful glare over the rocks as with a dull roaring sound, like that of rushing water, they were driven on one side by the wind, and such was the furious progress of the devouring element, that it seemed to threaten destruction to the whole surrounding forest.

Had Walther Stanz, known, as he gazed on this spectacle of ruin, how recently Justine had been a prisoner in that building, he would have looked on it with very different feelings. As it was it never occurred to any of the party that a human being might be within its blazing walls, and considering all attempts to extinguish the flames would be vain, Walther after regarding the conflagration with wonder and regret for a few moments, anxiously proposed that they should continue their way.

But there was no longer any track to guide them; the path by which they had ascended, evidently led no further than the chalet, and only at one other point of the terrace on which it stood, did it appear possible for the step of

man to find a footing. It was a wild and rugged bank, unshadowed by either tree or shrub, and descending by a gradual though steep declivity to the plain.

From the spot where they stood, they commanded a view of all that part of the mountain, and the only living object they could descry, was a party of French soldiers about a quarter of a mile beneath, marching with all speed towards a larger detachment, whose flag floated above an orchard, yet lower in the valley. Father Paul and Walther had no doubt they were the destroyers of the Chalet, but pursuit, it was quite evident, would be useless. At this moment when the young mountaineer appeared half bewildered by distress of mind, he would willingly have made the attempt, had the Hermit not represented to him, the danger and folly of such a proceeding. He reminded him that they had already deviated from their road, though their presence was urgently desired at the camp, and that as they had no longer any trace to guide them in their search for Justine,

it would be not only unprofitable, but a manifest breach of duty, any longer to protract their absence.

Poor Walther gazed vacantly on the recluse as if he scarcely understood his words, but broken hearted and despairing, suffered him to lead him whither he pleased. All his dreams of patriotism and glory were gone, like the mists of the morning; and as the Hermit led him through the forests, and strove to reanimate his courage and enterprizing spirit, by discoursing of the troubles of his country, and pointing with indignation to the French standards waving over every part of the plain, the words of the old man fell like a dull cadence on a weary ear; he heard, but heeded them not. The time he had long sighed for, the time of action had arrived; yet the happiness his visions had inseparably connected with it, was still wanting, and with deep regret his thoughts flew back from that scene of war, and desolation and lawless might, to the calm and peaceful hours, unvalued as they past, when ignorant

of sin, or real sorrow, he had sat watching his sheep in sight of Justine's dwelling, his thoughts alternately engaged by some book of the Hermit's, or wandering unconsciously away, to the pleasant fancies of love, and visions of a future never to be realised.

He had yet to learn the truth of what Father Paul had often told him, that such imaginings, are fruitless blossoms whose only real worth is in their own beauty, and that when happiness is vouchsafed to us, it comes not in the likeness of our prescient wishes, but in such strange and unexpected guise, that like an angel visitant man often fails to recognise the heavenly guest, till it hath spread its hidden wings and departed for ever.

END OF VOL. II.



THE THIRST FOR GOLD,

BY

HANNAH D. BURDON.

AUTHOR OF

"SEYMOUR OF SUDLEY," "THE LOST EVIDENCE,"
"THE FRIENDS OF FONTAINEBLEAU,"

To what gulphs
A single deviation from the track
Of human duties leads.

BYRON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON :

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1841.

STEVENS

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THE THIRST FOR GOLD.

CHAPTER I.

God hath upheld her —

She bears this last and heaviest of her griefs patiently, like one who finds from Heaven a comfort which the world can neither give nor take away.

SOUTHEY. RODERICK.

WHEN Justine revived from her swoon in the chalet to which Staffer had conducted her, she was greatly amazed to find herself entirely alone. The entrance and the shutters of a small window at the further end of the room, were closed, but sufficient light streamed through their fractures and crevices, to prove that her conductor was no longer there.

Her first idea was to endeavour to escape, and attempt, at every hazard, to make her way to the Swiss army. There, she felt assured, she should find Walther Stanz, with whom alone she hoped to be in safety. The story of his wounds she no longer believed, and however desolate her present position, her heart was greatly cheered by the conviction that Staffer had fabricated the whole narrative of her lover's danger. Fortunately for herself, she was well acquainted with all the intricate paths of that wild country, and though the idea of being made prisoner by the French was fraught with terror, she feared them less than Staffer, and in momentary apprehension of his return, she determined to fly without further delay.

But vain were all her plans and hopes, both the doors and windows were securely barred without, and firmly defied all her feeble efforts to force them open. In vain she pulled and shook, till her strength was exhausted ; and

weary and disappointed she sunk down on the floor and wept.

There she sat like a statue of despair; her long hair falling dishevelled around her torn and disordered dress, her lovely face pale with fatigue and weeping, and her bosom heaving with her sobs. The single ray of light that pierced the broken shutter, gleamed full upon her, and when the first violence of her grief was spent, she began with bewildered apathy to watch with vacant interest the moats that were dancing with restless velocity in the long sunbeam. She was happy once, and could dance as carelessly as they did, she thought, but then Staffer and her uncle, the uncle that was in other days all kindness, had come like a cloud between her and the sun, and there was nothing but darkness for her now.

All the while she was revolving a thousand such thoughts in her mind, and her tears dropping fast on the ground, she was watching the

glittering moats, as they wove their fantastic dance.

"Alas, in this dark world, there are but few bright streams of sunshine," she murmured, and scarcely had she uttered the words, when even that ray, was suddenly and almost entirely obscured.

Her mind was instantaneously recalled to a distinct consciousness of her position, and still keeping her eyes fixed upon the lattice, she soon became convinced it was by a human head the light was obstructed. Ere long, with infinite terror she imagined she could distinguish a face pressed against the rent in the shutter, and an eye glistening through it, as it gazed intently upon her. She feared either to move or breathe.

If it were an enemy! one of those Frenchmen of whom since the massacre of her countrymen in Paris the darkest apprehensions had been impressed upon her mind, she dared not

think what might be her fate ; and she felt it would be madness to give a sign to betray the solitary presence of a helpless being like herself in such a place.

Then she remembered that sufficient light still made its way though the upper part of the aperture, for her figure to be distinctly visible to any one without, and trembling from head to foot, sat expecting the result with indescribable terror.

For a few moments the shadow likewise remained immoveable.

A profound stillness prevailed around, and Justine whose fear momentarily increased, was conscious of nothing but that terrible eye, glaring at her through the rent in the shutter, till to her utter amazement, she heard her own name pronounced in a shrill, cracked voice.

“ Hans Brunk ! ” she exclaimed starting wildly up, and rushing towards the window, “ can it be possible, or are my senses wandering ? ”

"Yes, Mamselle Justine;" answered the man in a squeaking voice, "it is Hans, sure enough, but in the name of all the Saints, what has brought you to sit poking in this dismal place by yourself, like a cow that is ruminating?"

"Let me out, I implore you, let me out, and then I will answer every question you please to put to me," replied the girl in hurried accents.

"You don't mean to say you are a prisoner?" rejoined Hans.

"Oh yes! yes! so pray let me out! the door is fast, and I have tried till I am weary to force it open. But if you came round, no doubt you could undo the bolts on the outside."

"I am pretty expert in matters of that sort and will be there in a twinkling," cried the tailor, with the little short cough that usually followed his announcement of his own performances; and in less than two minutes afterwards Justine heard, with a bounding heart, that he had commenced the work.

"Clumsy fellows that did this, as ever I saw

in my life," said he meanwhile ; " they never were bred to the business, that is quite plain, and if they had no better idea of handling a needle, why I would not trust them to patch my worst doublet, that is all."

" Cannot you get it open ?" cried Justine eagerly.

" Oh yes, Mamselle, all in good time ; it might puzzle many, no doubt, and here is a knot some fellow, I daresay, thought he was very cunning to tie, but he was no match for a tailor."

" Oh, cut it," exclaimed Justine impatiently, " only let me out, or Staffer will be back again !"

" Ha ! ha ! Staffer did you say ? so it was not the French made you a prisoner ! well, well so I thought ! men that have their clothes made with such a superior cut, would never have done such a bungling business as this, or have left a pretty girl moping in a dark hole by herself, when they could have given her their own

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"How a veil," said her companion dryly, and after stretching more than half his body within the door, so as to take a complete survey of the interior of the chalet, he hastily demanded, if the place was entirely stripped.

“There is not even a wooden bowl left in it,” replied Justine. “What did you expect?”

“Oh nothing! nothing,” he returned with affected carelessness, “only I thought if there were any trifles to be picked up, I might as well take them, as leave them for those rascally French. Don’t you think so? In fact, I came here for nothing else; for poor people when they run off in a hurry, and the guns are rattling behind them, are apt to forget a trifle now and then. But if there is nothing as you say, then there is nothing, and the sooner we are gone the better. It is a wretched hole certainly, I am sorry I lost my time clambering so far to it, only I let you out, and that will vex Michael Graaf at all events.”

During all this long speech, Justine was perpetually interrupting him with entreaties to begone, but only replying to her by an impatient shake of the head, he continued peeping inquisitively about the chalet, in the anxious hope of finding something worth carrying away

with him. His business being interrupted by the war, and his cowardice preventing him joining the ranks of the patriots, the idea had that morning occurred to his mind that he might derive some advantage from the misfortunes of his fellow creatures, by appropriating any of their stray possessions to his own use. Common theft he held in utter abhorrence, but the little acquisitions he might make in this way, he esteemed as lawful plunder, and his conscience no more reproached him, when he pocketted a purse of gold he found in a closet of a deserted farm house, than when, according to the privileges of his trade, he cribbed from a Baillie's mantle, sufficient cloth to make himself a comfortable winter waistcoat.

Hans was one of those honest men who never openly violate the law, yet avail themselves of every advantage which chance places in their way; and whilst he lustily abused the French, he thought himself quite privileged to make a harvest of the ruin they occasioned.

Justine at another time would have taken him to task for his peculations, but she was then too agitated to pay much attention to his proceedings. She only implored him to depart.

“Yes, yes,” he said, “soon enough. What beggars the people must have been that dwelt here. If the French had found no richer nests to rob in Lucerne, they would not have been paid for their powder! But mercy on me, don’t you hear some people singing in that copse, just under us? yes surely, and in French too! Mercy on me, what will become of us! there must be half a regiment of them at least, to raise such a clatter as that.”

“Indeed, indeed Hans, we had better begone,” returned Justine, and the tailor now no longer opposed her wishes, but even more terrified than herself, by the conviction that a party of the enemy was rapidly approaching, he hurried her with all speed, under the covert of the brushwood that clothed the steep acclivity, at the back of the chalet.

The stunted beech grew too short to conceal them had they stood upright, but the advance of the soldiers rendered it impossible to gain the open path, and by the whispered advice of her companion, Justine crept after him, under the waving branches, along the steep face of the mountain, where none but a native of that wild land could have kept their footing.

They heard the Frenchmen laughing and shouting beneath them, and then with loud oaths gave vent to their indignation, when like Hans, their hopes of plunder were proved vain, and they found not even a cheese remaining in the hovel, to reward them for the labour of climbing the rugged mountain.

"It is well we got off, or they would have vented their spite upon us," whispered the tailor, and scarcely had he uttered the words, when a sudden blast of wind raising the branches under which he crept, the round face of Hans Brunk, crawling along upon all fours, was fully disclosed to view.

“Holla, what goes there !” cried one of the soldiers below, who instantly observed this strange object, clinging like a huge bat to the precipice above ; and forthwith a bullet whizzed close past the ears of the terrified fugitive, and the report of a musket echoed far and wide amongst the mountains.

“On, Justine, on for our lives !” exclaimed Hans, “we shall be shot like squirrels on an oak tree, if we do not get round that brow of the cliff before us, in less than a minute.” The girl as nimble as a goat, sprang upon her feet, and before the shout that hailed her appearance died away, had gained the desired shelter. But Hans was less fortunate. His limbs were neither so agile, nor his body so slender as it had once been, and ere, by the help of an old stump of a tree, he could raise himself on his legs, a whole volley of shot was rattling amongst the leaves around him, and he did not overtake Justine till the contents of a musket had rent the tails of his coat into shreds.

The Frenchmen uttered loud imprecations when they saw the fugitives get beyond the reach of their guns, and several of them, with coarse jests on the tailor's figure and misfortune, strove to ascend the mountain in pursuit of them. But, encumbered with their arms, they soon found it impossible to scale the rugged cliff, and after mounting about twice the height of the chalet, breathless and giddy they were obliged to desist, nor was it without momentary danger of being plunged by one false step down the precipice that they accomplished their descent to the chalet. In the pure wantonness of mischief, their next act was to set fire to the forsaken dwelling, and whilst Hans and Justine continued to advance slowly along the rocks, the sight of the rising flames afforded them additional reason to rejoice at their escape. Yet still their progress was attended with extreme peril. Path there was none, and the broken stones repeatedly rolled away, even from beneath the light footsteps of Justine, and

went leaping from point to point down the mountain, till, swift as light, they were lost in the abyss beneath; frequently the slender twigs she held gave way in her hand, and with difficulty she regained her balance, or caught at some less insecure support. But she had not a feeling of terror, and without giddiness, or tremour, she slid down the grassy steeps, she sprang from rock to rock, or clinging to the projecting points of the crags, glided like a spirit along the narrow ledges of the mountain.

To Hans all this was much more difficult; but the love of life makes even a coward perform many exploits, for which nature seems never to have intended him; and when all was over, the tailor repeatedly declared, that the whole wealth of the Indies could not bribe him to retrace the perilous way he had that day trodden.

Nevertheless, both he and Justine, about two hours after noon, were so far in advance of the French troops, that they at length ventured to

leave the copse, and proceed openly along the first beaten track they found. Hans was well aware that Aloys Reding had taken up a position near the Lake of Lowertz, and thither accordingly they directed their way. Nor was it long till they obtained a full view of the little hamlet, and the meadows where the army reposed.

The wounded were placed in the vacant cottages of the fugitive peasantry ; but the trenches hastily thrown up in front of the position were distinctly to be seen ; outposts were stationed to the very edge of the Lake, and the banners of the Canton were everywhere fluttering over the green pasture-lands that sloped up the side of the Mythen.

But though Hans could exactly point out the spot where the General and his officers had fixed their temporary dwelling, he could not, in reply to Justine's anxious inquiries, afford her the slightest information either concerning Walther, or Lena ; and ignorant if either of

them was in the camp, it was with momentarily increasing timidity and apprehension, that the poor girl approached a scene, so utterly at variance with all her previous habits. But in her search for her lover, even her fears could not alter her resolution.

She felt there was no one else in the world upon whom she could depend, but himself; and when at length the scattered ranks of the insurgents thickened around her, and her heart sunk at finding herself the object of their scrutiny, one thought of his kind, sweet countenance, restored her perseverance, if not her courage, and almost fancying she heard the voice she so much loved, cheering her on her way, her strength was renewed and her fainting hopes revived.

It was her wish to proceed at once to the quarters of Aloys Reding, as she was there most likely to obtain news of Walther, or Father Paul; but to this Hans decidedly objected, as his recognition there would at once put an end

edly called him, no one answered to her cries, She sat down perplexed and disconsolate on the brink of the well, to await his return, till when the sinking sun threw its level beams, like a pillar of gold along the Lake of Zug, she became convinced it was useless to protract her stay.

In the disturbed state of the country she shrunk with terror from remaining all night alone and unprotected in that exposed situation; yet to pursue her former purpose, now she had lost her companion, appeared scarcely less formidable. The insurgents were around her on every side, she heard the clatter of arms, and the beating of drums; and the loud notes of the shepherds' horns, once most musical to her ears, now perverted from their use, filled her young heart with dread. After a brief reflection, she felt convinced that in whatever direction she turned her steps she should be equally liable to interruption, and perhaps insult, whilst no where should she have the same

chance of discovering Walther Stanz, as at the General's quarters ; and thither, as she at first intended, she resolved at last to go.

The heart that is under the influence of a strong passion, though it may hesitate, and doubt, and indulge innumerable fancies, ever finally obeys the first dictates of the master feeling, and the woman's natural terrors yielded to the overpowering strength of her attachment.

"We must help ourselves if we would have heaven assist us," she thought, "and I doubt not the virgin will protect a poor girl, who can claim no one's assistance but hers."

There was a little stone image of the Holy Mother, above the fountain, in a niche overhung with ivy ; the yellow cistus and wallflower, and many a slender grass had taken root in the crevices of the old shrine, to wave fragrant and lovely on the evening breeze, and the rippling water fell over the sculptured shell it imperceptibly filled, into the stone bason beneath, whilst the statue above seemed, in the placid

sunbeams, to smile with holy tranquillity at the harsh sounds of war, that ever and anon broke on the calm air.

Justine knelt with upturned eyes of hope and confidence before the chiselled figure, where some sculptor of the middle age, inspired by his religion, had imparted to the rugged stone a portion of his own pious soul, and though to critical observers it might have been deficient in ideal beauty, no devotee ever failed to find in the benignant image, the sympathy she craved. That poor maiden, when she offered up her hurried prayers, believed it smiled upon her ; and heaven ever does smile on the supplications of the pure of heart.

She at length arose, and conscious that her disordered dress and desolate appearance would expose her even more than her solitude, to rude observation, she bathed her hands and face in the cool water, and by the help of this natural mirror, arranged her dishevelled hair in the best manner she was able. This done, she once

more commended herself to the care of the Holy Mother, and greatly cheered, resumed her way, in the direction she had been told by Hans to follow.

But his instructions were very vague, and after she had passed an open meadow, the whole district was so thickly studded with soldiers, some busily employed in throwing up trenches, others reposing on their arms, or preparing their evening meal, that she had no longer any idea which way she ought to turn ; but remembering that these men, though now engaged in war, were for the most part, simple peasants, whom the love of their country had alone brought from their rustic employments, in defence of their homes and families, she felt greatly reassured, and determined that when she reached the next piquet she would at once go up to the commander, and inquire the way to the quarters of Aloys Reding.

Nor was she long in doing so, for after crossing a little stream, she had not advanced many

paces towards the hamlet on its bank—when she came suddenly on a party of half a dozen men, who under the shelter of a broken wall were leisurely cooking their supper.

They had lighted a fire, above which suspended from three strong sticks, hung a large kettle, in which, one was stirring with the handle of a pike, whilst two others awkwardly tearing the feathers from a duck, and a fourth leaning on his gun, watched their proceedings, sometimes whistling, sometimes singing a mountain air, at the top of his voice.

Tears filled the eyes of Justine as she paused to listen, for there was something sadly wild and plaintive in hearing a song that recalled to her past hours of peace and love, thus sung on the eve of battle, perhaps on the very verge of death. The soldiers appeared to participate in her emotion, for a grey haired old man who had hitherto sat silent on the grass, with his back to Justine, after looking for some

minutes earnestly at the singer, abruptly bade him be still.

"Methinks," he added, "it would be better for thee to be saying thy prayers, like a sensible and God fearing Christian, than carolling such light ballads, when thou knowest not, but the musket is charged, that is to silence thee for ever."

"I have no doubt it is, Father Schwartz, and that is the reason I sing," returned the youth; "if I must die so soon, I would fain think of the pleasant things of this world, as long as I can, and that ballad brings many a happy thought into my mind, of one I may never live to see again."

"Truly it is time to put away such fancies, when you are standing on the brink of eternity," returned the old man sharply. "Dreams profit no man here, and bear no fruit hereafter."

"Nay you are too severe Schwartz," said another; "few of us to my thinking, would

wait patiently here to cross bayonets with the enemy, if we thought all night of nothing but a bullet whizzing through our bodies. You are old, Schwartz, and have lost all fancy for young men's pleasures, so it is easy for you to persuade yourself you despise them, but faith, I am for being happy as long as I can, and whether I am to be shot on the morrow, or not, I see no good in meeting death half way."

"Ay," said a third, "let us have another ballad, about old Switzerland and liberty, to put fresh courage in our hearts."

"I'll do my best, for to die bravely we should forget that death is near," answered the singer, and crossing his arms above his rifle he again sounded a few notes of a mountain ballad, but it was no longer with the same spirit as before, and it was evident his thoughts were far distant. But no one heard him—no one marked him save Justine. The pious admonition of the old shepherd, had impressed all with dark presenti-

ments, and a gloomy silence replaced their former mirth.

The maiden thought it a favourable moment to urge her suit, and gliding from behind the bushes, where she had hitherto remained concealed, she advanced with trembling diffidence towards the soldiers.

Many of the reckless huntsmen of the Upper Alps, men who in those high solitudes sought refuge from the outraged laws, or freedom from their trammels, had on the first tidings of war hurried to join in a yet more exciting pursuit than that of the chase, and even in the ranks of Aloys Reding, the champion of a righteous cause, abandoned and unprincipled adventurers were to be found; yet those to whom Justine now ventured to address herself, were of a different class. Simple tillers of the soil, or herders of cattle, who had hitherto lived in happy ignorance of many of the cares, and vices of more civilized man, they had taken up their weapons in defence of their country, with a

spirit worthy of its history. Industry had preserved their minds from the thirst for excitement, and that restlessness of the faculties that drives the idle so frequently to crime; they neither thought of glory, nor of profit; but though whatever their successes, they had no chance of being rewarded by either, they were animated by more pure and noble feelings. Though the names of such humble men may drop unrecorded on earth into the abyss of time, yet where the secrets of human hearts are all revealed, the proudest conqueror, who for ambition ever trod the paths of fame, will shrink into darkness before these honest patriots, whom the tender affections of the heart, the love of home, of kindred, and of country, have alone inspired to meet death in defence of the helpless who cling to them, the soil their fathers' bones have hallowed, and the rights and liberties from whence their virtues and their courage are alike derived.

Such men are ever compassionate and mer-

fain proceed without delay; I have been too long already on my road."

"Truly, it is plain to be seen you have travelled further than your strength warrants," said the old man compassionately. "Has your home been burnt, or your friends slain, that you come thus solitary to the camp?"

"The only friend I have in the wide world is here," answered Justine, with tears in her eyes, "and I would fain see him, and speak to him once more."

"Poor child! but what has our commander to do with that?"

"Mayhap, he can tell me where to find him," was the maiden's simple answer.

"It may be, that some of us can do you that service, as well," rejoined the shepherd. "What is the name of him you seek?"

"Walther Stanz," murmured Justine in a low voice, and though she gazed anxiously on the face of the old man, to glean an answer from his looks, before his voice replied to her,

no colour tinged her pale cheek, as she uttered the name.

Love is yet young and feeble, when blushes mantle on the face at every allusion to its object. The heart engrossed by deep passion, is unconscious of observation, and takes no heed of human opinion. Thus it was, that it never occurred to Justine, that others might think her conduct strange, or bold, in coming alone into this crowd of soldiers, in search of a young man to whom she bore no kindred. He was her beloved, her betrothed, the being whose affection constituted her happiness, her world; and to be assured of his safety, and confident of his protection, she would willingly have traversed the world, heedless of the comments, or the blame of all others, who were no more than shadows to her.

The young man who had ceased his song at her approach, knew in an instant by the tone of her voice as she uttered his name, that Walther was her lover. He had loved himself,

and quickly interposing, he told her with a smile, that since the battle of the past night, every soldier in the army knew the gallant fellow she inquired for.

“Was he wounded?” she eagerly demanded.

“Not that I know of,” was the reply. “He went to the Righi this morning, in search of Father Paul; but I believe they returned together before noon.”

“With the Hermit?” murmured the astonished girl.

“Ay, maiden, no doubt you have heard of that holy man! if there is a guardian spirit holds watch above the fortunes of Switzerland, it is he! He blessed our banners ere we went to battle, and if the decrees of providence are influenced by the prayers of the just, then will success attend us, for day and night he pleads in our behalf. His arrival at the camp has already filled our hearts with new hopes, for the favour of heaven is with us, when that Saint is here.”



THE TRUTH WAS KNOWN

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undergone, the eye of the weary girl flashed brightly as she eagerly accepted his offer, and hope, as she speeded along by the side of her new guide, was like an unseen angel at her side, animating and sustaining her exhausted frame.

Impassioned youth has keener trials than old age ; but it has to compensate for them, its own sweet delusions ; prospects of ideal beauty, mystical labyrinths of felicity, which as they pass, seem all realities, and excite deep, pure, extatic emotions which in themselves are heaven. The weary traveller in after years catches no glimpse of such new glories ; sometimes a speck of gold may sparkle amongst the last wasting sands of his existence, but it is only a particle borne by the waves of time, from those bright regions which the shadows of years have hidden for ever from his view. All things throughout eternity have their appointed circles of successive renewal and decay.

The day beholds the freshness of no second morn; the year sees not twice the blossoms of the spring; nor to man, however many of both he may count in long succession, will youth and all its glories come again. Death is the winter and the night to him, and though new years, and new days, and new men, start up for ever in their appointed order into existence, their progress and their end, is still the same.

No human creature when past the meridian of life, can feel that bounding elasticity of spirit, which thrilled through Justine's heart that day, when she approached the hovel where she expected to find the Swiss General; no heart can (when advanced in years) cling with trusting devotion to another, and find in that feeling, all good, all hope, all happiness, as she did then. Already a gloom from the grave is stealing over the mind; the consciousness of death is fading the blossoms

of the morning ; the stern realities of life have replaced youth's fanciful visions, and aware of the vanity and shortness of existence, the saddened heart turns from the present to gaze upon a brighter, but a solemn glory, that shines beyond the tomb.

CHAPTER I.

In company with a friend, the author
 Went down to the river, and saw the war
 Which he had seen in the city of London.
 The river was full of boats, and the
 The river was full of boats, and the
 The river was full of boats, and the
 The river was full of boats, and the

About fifty of the party, as a wild and various
 group, were assembled in front of the hotel to
 which the young shepherd conducted Jasmine :
 some leaning carelessly on their arms, others
 in deep and earnest discussion on the fortunes
 of the war ; many sadly musing as they paced
 to and fro, on the homes they had come to de-
 fend ; and a few less inured to hardship, and ex-

hausted by their unwonted labours, stretched in deep slumber beneath the alder trees that skirted the meadow. One man only stood as if actually on guard at the door, and to him the youth at once advanced, and communicated Justine's desire to speak with Aloys Reding.

"Does the maiden bring tidings of importance," was the reply.

"She will tell her business to the General herself," he returned.

"Ay, when she sees him," muttered the soldier fixing a searching glance upon Justine, as if to ascertain from her countenance, whether he should be justified in granting her request.

The shrinking girl blushed deeply beneath the scrutiny, and fearful that refusal awaited her, she clasped her hands wildly, and in a sweet, earnest voice, implored him to let her speak with the Landshauptmann, if it were only for a moment.

Few hearts could have resisted the appeal, and though the guard was stern and old—he smiled.

a grim consent, and resting his rifle against the door-post, disappeared into the hovel. The interval which elapsed before his return was to Justine a wilderness of tangled thoughts, where none were distinct, nor definite. She could not have told why she came thither, or expected, especially from Aloys Reding, to hear tidings of Walther; and whilst in hurried accents she thanked her conductor for his kindness, she trembled at her own temerity. But when the sentinel ere long returned, and told her to enter the cottage, she at once forgot her apprehensions, and instantly darted through the threshold.

From a dark passage which she then entered, an open door gave admission to the room beyond. She heard voices within, but though her heart beat wildly, she glided on, and in another moment entered a large, low room, the principal apartment of a peasant's dwelling. She was little prepared for the scene she there beheld.

The wooden walls of the chamber were black with the smoke of half a century, and only one small window admitted the bright beams of evening, which fell full upon the figure of a man in military costume, seated at a table beneath it, and deepened, rather than dispelled, the surrounding gloom.

His uniform, the plumed hat lying on a chair at his side, and more than either, the ample forehead, and intellectual, weather beaten face of the veteran, convinced her, she beheld the Commander-in-chief; and the false courage which had supported her through so many dangers, at once forsook her, when she felt herself in the presence of a man, so high in authority, and so universally regarded with respect, almost amounting to veneration.

The General, unconscious of her presence, continued to peruse with absorbing interest, the papers spread out before him, and as trembling and dismayed, she gazed in silent awe on this remarkable man, she felt, with shame and

contrition, the vastness of her presumption in thus intruding on one upon whose mental, as well as physical exertions, at that important crisis, the fate of her country depended. Could she have escaped unobserved, she would gladly, even now when so near the accomplishment of her hopes, have glided silently away; but she saw that an old man who, in the garb of a monk, sat, as if fulfilling the office of secretary immediately opposite, had his eyes fixed intently upon her, and drooping and dismayed she remained as if rooted to the spot.

Not a word was spoken either by the priest or the officer, but there was a low murmur of voices in an inner chamber, and, at intervals, deep groans were audible, not only from thence, but even from the dark recesses of the room where the maiden stood, and gradually, as her eyes became accustomed to the light, she saw dimly in the surrounding shadow, the sad, pale visages of men, who lay stretched on confused piles of straw, or hay, or leaves, around

the gloomy dwelling. Death and agony were on every face of these poor wounded victims of the last night's battle, and with wild feelings of distress, amounting almost to despair, Justine glanced from one to another, dreading, yet half expecting to recognize her lover amidst the awful group. But though there were many even younger than Walther amongst the sufferers, they were all strangers to her, and she turned away to wipe the tears from her eyes, with a deep sigh that seemed to relieve her heart from almost mortal agony.

That sigh, for the first time, attracted the attention of Aloys Reding to the maiden, and, lifting his eyes from his papers, he was amazed to behold that young, fair creature, standing weeping before him. Her dress was torn and disordered, her face pale and sad, and her whole figure had an air of fatigue and suffering; but still her beauty was conspicuous, and the General was not a man to turn away with indiffe-

THE FIRST FOUR BOOKS

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are many of the poor fellows in this and the neighbouring hovels, who much lack nurses for their wounds."

"I asked for him of many," she answered, "but all said, that though he fought bravely, he had received no injury."

"Is it a brother, or a husband, you are in search of?" inquired Reding, with an indulgent smile.

"It is Walther Stanz," replied the maiden simply.

"Walther Stanz!" repeated the General, with unconcealed amazement, "he has no sister, and I never heard he had a wife."

"Oh no—no—I am neither his sister, nor his wife, and yet—" and she stopped and hung down her head in sweet confusion.

"And yet—you have come to seek him! then he is your lover, I presume?"

The maiden was silent.

"If that is your only claim on the young soldier," continued Reding, more gravely, "it

would have been better for you to have sought shelter with the women, in the rear of the army, than to have come here alone, and unprotected, where men, and men only should be found."

"Alas, I knew not whither to go," replied the weeping girl. "The cottage was burnt, his mother fled, and I thought that here I should find Walther, and he would tell what was best to do. I have known him from a child."

"But surely you must be aware, that Walther Stanz, and all here have weighty things to think of now, that brook not such interruptions. He is in arms for his country, and must not be diverted from his duty. Love, and such soft themes, have nothing to do with a campaign like ours. Leave this young man undisturbed, and I will send one to point out to you where the women have taken refuge."

"Alas! I have come so far! I would fain have seen him, if only for one moment," murmured Justine, and she hid her face, and wept bitter though silent tears.

Though Aloys Reding justly felt that it was no time for him to permit the hearts of his followers to be diverted from their perilous enterprise, by thoughts of love, or the spectacle of female sorrow, he was yet greatly moved by the affliction of a being so young and desolate.

“Walther Stanz is absent, at a distant outpost, so there is no chance of your seeing him to-night,” he said, “even were I disposed to grant your wish; but go to the women who have taken shelter in the hills behind Schwytz, and he will not fail to come to you after to-morrow’s battle.”

“Oh, to-morrow! but what may to-morrow not bring to pass!” sighed Justine in broken accents.

“I have much to do ere then,” returned the General, “and cannot longer waste the time. Brugel!” he cried in a louder tone, to a soldier who had hitherto stood motionless near the door, “see this maiden in safety through the camp, on the road towards Schwytz.”

“So please you, sir, I know not if it may not be wiser to detain her,” said the man advancing nearer to the table, as he spoke. “I suspect she is here for no good, for she is one of our enemy’s party.”

“Do you know her then?” hastily demanded the General.

“Ay, that I do, as well as my own mother! She is the niece of Michael Graaf of Lucerne, who nearly brought Walther Stanz to the scaffold last week, and instead of being in need of the youth’s protection, she is only come here as a spy, I dare be sworn.”

“Ha! this is strange!” exclaimed Reding.

“Oh, no! do not believe it,” cried Justine, sinking on her knees before him, “I am no spy! I am only a poor forlorn creature who has fled from misery and disgrace to seek that protection from another, I could not claim from my own kindred.”

“But you do not deny that you are the niece of Michael Graaf!”

“ It is too true ! but I am not a spy, and if I have been too bold in coming hither, it was despair that drove me to it. Since yesterday I have been hunted from rock to rock, I have escaped through the wildest passes of the mountain, as by a miracle, from the hands of the enemy, and now, when weary and broken hearted, I cast myself at your feet for mercy, do not let me be condemned so unjustly.”

“ Methinks you had better have gone to the French camp,” said the General sternly, “ your uncle, there, would doubtless have found you many friends.”

“ Oh no, no, he is the worst enemy I have ! this man knows nothing of me, but my name and kindred. I am in misery ; and wretchedness is a crime in the eyes of many ; but when Father Paul returns to the camp, he will attest my innocence, and tell you the whole story of my misfortunes !”

There was an expression so touching in the voice and manner of the poor girl, as she thus

wildly gave utterance to her feelings, that Aloys Reding could no longer have a doubt of her truth, and spoke gently when he answered—
“ It seems strange that Father Paul should be able to say anything in favour of one, whose uncle is the greatest traitor in Switzerland, the man who has brought the French into the heart of his country, who was the perjured accuser of Walther Stanz, and the plunderer of the public treasury !”

“ Believe me, I took no part in his intrigues,” cried Justine eagerly interrupting him.

“ If the Hermit is your friend, your honesty can be speedily proved,” said the General, “ Brugel—the Hermit is in the next Novel, praying with the sick ; request him to come hither,” he added, turning to the soldier who instantly disappeared, in obedience to this command.

“ They told me Father Paul was absent,” said the girl with some surprise.

“ Ah, did they ?” returned Reding drily, as

if he suspected that she already repented her appeal to the Holy man; "they led you into a mistake, as you will shortly see; but arise, I pray you, no one, I trust, need kneel to me for justice."

The girl slowly obeyed, and there was a pause for some minutes, during which nothing was to be heard in that gloomy chamber, but the deep groans of the wounded, and the stifled sobs of Justine, as with her apron pressed before her eyes, she stood motionless in the middle of the floor.

Heavy steps in the outer passage, first broke the stillness, and when the maiden turned eagerly towards the door, there, in the last beams of the setting sun, she beheld with inexpressible delight, the tall figure of the Hermit just emerging from the gloom, with the cowl of his monk's frock drawn down over his forehead, and the crucifix he had recently held before the eyes of the dying, still pressed against his breast.

The astonishment of the old man was unbounded, when Justine with a joyful exclamation sprang towards him, and taking her hand in his, he eagerly demanded how she had found her way thither.

"Staffer made me his prisoner," she rapidly returned, "but I escaped with Hans, and came to the camp, in search of you and Walther. They say I am a spy, but you will tell the General all, Father Paul, and he will believe you!"

"Is it possible," said Aloys Reding, "that this maiden can be the niece of Michael Graaf, and yet claim you, as her friend?"

"She has told you the truth," replied the Hermit "for though she is allied by blood to the Treasurer, no creatures can be more dissimilar."

"She came hither, it seems, in search of Walther Stanz," said Reding; "such love missions scarcely befit the time, or place."

"They are betrothed!" answered the Hermit, "and their marriage was alone prevented

by the battle. When Walther's mother fled from the Righi, this poor girl had no other protector than myself. Lena is amongst those courageous women, who, instead of flying to the mountains, have remained to assist the army by their labours, and with your permission I will place Justine with her, for her lover has taken up his position for the night, with a party of our bravest soldiers, at the very extremity of our line towards Arth."

"As you know the maiden, Father Paul, of course you are the best judge in this matter," replied Reding, "so good night, my poor girl; this holy man will find you a lodging, for you have plainly much need of rest; and then my friend," he added turning towards the Hermit, "I shall be glad to talk over with you, our plans for the morrow."

Father Paul, by a silent inclination of the head, signified his assent, and Justine having timidly thanked the General for his kindness, they departed together without further delay.

CHAPTER III.

“ Sing aloud

Old songs, the precious music of the heart!
Whilst we go forth a self-devoted crowd,
With weapons in the fearless hand, to assert
Our virtue and to vindicate mankind.”

WORDSWORTH.

WHEN the Hermit and his young companions emerged from the cottage, the still serenity of the evening sky had departed. Every object on earth was a confused chaos of purple shadows, whose outline could with difficulty be traced; and huge masses of dark, wild clouds, were rising in the west, above the broad, red sun whose half hidden disk threw by its declining glory, all other objects into gloom.

The gale blew fitfully through the valley, bending down the trees for a moment, and making a wild murmur amidst their branches, then rushing onwards, and leaving them in brief and solemn repose. But in these intervals there was no silence. The low, sullen murmur of distant thunder, rolled almost incessantly over the Rossberg, till at length after set of sun, broad flashes of liquid lightning, ever and anon revealed the endless labyrinths of the moving clouds, and a dropping fire of musketry, ten times multiplied by the echoes of the surrounding mountains, gave evidence that the war that night was not alone amongst the elements.

“This is an awful spectacle, Justine,” said the old man, suddenly arresting his hurried footsteps, and gazing with a troubled eye over earth and heaven, “methinks the angel of destruction hovers over our devoted land! yet man—man is the sole destroyer. That crash of elements will pass away ere morn, and



THE FIRST PART

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REIGN OF HENRY THE SEVENTH
OF ENGLAND
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JOHN HALLAM
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OF THE INNER TEMPLE
OF THE BARRISTERS AT LAW
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND
SEVEN HUNDRED AND FORTY SEVEN

THE SECOND PART OF THE HISTORY OF THE
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are many in this valley, who have looked for the last time upon the sun, and many more, who though yet unburied, were unconscious of its setting. But I will not despair! Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof, and though in my youth I have seen many wars, I never yet knew one, where either party had so just a cause, as that we fight for now. Faith—honor—virtue—and all the best affections of the heart, have made our peasants and our shepherds soldiers, and in such inspiration lies our strength. The worldly men who lead our enemies, would if they heard me, laugh my words to scorn. They are citizens of the world and know not the strong ties of reverence for antiquity, and the calm strength of habit. They never fought upon a field like that of Morgarten, as our brave countrymen did yesternight, where five centuries before, their ancestors, poor peasants like themselves, had triumphed over the insolent oppressors of their land—no voices from the abyss of time cheer them amidst the

battle; no image either of wife, or child, flitted before their eyes, to nerve their hand in the hour of danger. They may scoff who will at our poverty, and ignorance of the art of war, but though our little band of patriots be finally borne down by multitudes, neither avarice nor ambition, nor the lust of conquest, can impart a strength to the heart, like that which the holy affections bestow upon man."

"Heaven send our country may triumph," returned Justine, whilst tears chased each other rapidly down her cheeks, "yet, alas! who can tell which of us may live to see that day, and if those we love fall one by one before our eyes, it were better at once to die."

"Your days have been brief and bright, my poor child," answered her companion, "and you have yet to learn there are many afflictions besides war, that wither the blossoms of the heart and make men, in their deep sense of loneliness, long eagerly for death, before their journey to the grave is half accomplished. But re-

member, that life was given for trial, not for happiness—for patience, not despair, we must live for others, even when death is all we covet for ourselves.”

“ But Walther is brave—he is skilful in the use of the rifle, and as some men must escape, why should he not be one of them ?” said Justine timidly.

“ I trust by the mercy of heaven, he may,” said the Hermit, “ for earth has need of such a lofty and unsullied spirit; and look Justine,” he added, suddenly laying one hand on the arm of his companion, whilst he pointed with the other to a bright star that at that moment shone forth above the Righi, between a rent in the stormy clouds, “ never yet amidst sorrow and adversity hath mine eye rested upon yon bright planet, but it hath proved a harbinger of good ! Some men would call this feeling superstition, and it may be so ! They reason with cold, calm feelings, but I do not, and whilst the delusion, if

such it be, suffices to lift my soul above all passing trouble, I will not rob myself of such treasure. Yes!" he continued, still gazing with wrapt attention on the sky, "the storm that enveloped its rising has dispersed, and now the broad, pure sky, spreads brightly all around it. We will accept the augury, but at the same time forget not, that we must labour for ourselves, if we would have heaven assist us! The forces of our invaders are incalculable, and every arm, however feeble, is of value now. Even your labour, Justine, may assist your country in this hour of need. Lena, since she left the mountain, has placed herself at the head of a band of women, who have all day been carrying fascines to the entrenchments, and when you have taken needful rest, she will teach you how you can best turn your labour to profit."

"I have been used to toil, and will do all in my power," returned the maiden, "but hark! Father Paul, methought I heard music. Yes

surely it is the chorus of the milkers, when they follow the cattle to the high pastures in the spring !”

The Hermit stopped to listen, and amidst the pauses of the tempest, he caught fitful snatches of female voices, singing a pastoral chorus, and as with his companion he approached a cottage at the further end of a low meadow, the words gradually became distinctly audible.

This simple strain of peace and beauty, with which these poor women strove to banish the remembrance of their awful position, by the recollection of former pleasure, contrasted so fearfully with the wild jar of the elements, and the horrors of war, which every where surrounded them, that both Father Paul and Justine, were deeply affected as they listened to the notes, and the old man waited till the song was done, before he led his companion into the cottage.

It was a dismal hovel, where the darkness

was alone dispelled by a large wood fire, that blazed on a broad flagstone near the centre of the floor, sending up a volume of smoke to curl around the rafters above, and find egress as it could, through a hole in the chip thatched roof. More than thirty women of all ages were assembled there; some with their infants in their arms, others seated on the ground, making their laps the pillows of their sleeping children; a few stretched on piles of leaves, forgetting their sorrows in deep slumber, and many of the younger and more robust, still busily occupied in preparing wadding for the guns, and lint for the wounded soldiers.

Lena, seated on a log of wood near the fire, was amongst the latter, and no sooner had she recognized Father Paul, than hastily pronouncing his name, she and all her companions arose with the most profound respect to welcome their holy guest. The Hermit stretched forth his withered hand, and pronounced a blessing on them, whilst all who were conscious of his

presence, murmured a low prayer, and devoutly crossing themselves, returned again to their several occupations.

Lena alone, having caught a glimpse of Justine as she lingered in the deep shadow behind her conductor, cast aside her work, and rushing eagerly forward, clasped the poor girl in her arms, with a wild exclamation of delight. The heart of the maiden was too full for words, and silently she rested her head on her shoulder and wept; but her tears were more of joy than sorrow, for as Lena pressed her again and again in her arms with all a parent's fondness, she felt with deep delight, that the kind shepherdess was the mother of Walther Stanz.

But Father Paul, well aware of all the fatigue and anxiety Justine had that day undergone, speedily insisted on her partaking of such fare as the hovel afforded. This done, and her adventures briefly told, the shepherdess led her to a dark corner of the hut, and made her lie

down on the rude bed she had prepared for herself.

"You shall see Walther to-morrow," she whispered, as she pressed her hand, and kissed her pale cheek ere she left her to repose, and then gliding away to the fire she resumed her work.

Father Paul, after addressing a few words to her in a low, deep, earnest voice, glided from the hovel, for he had not forgotten the desire of Aloys Reding.

When he went abroad into the open air, the storm was still raging fearfully, and the dark clouds reflected, not only the flashing lights of heaven, but the lurid glare of innumerable fires that blazed on the peaks of all the mountains. The dropping fire of musketry was to be heard afar off, and as the old man approached the General's quarters, many of the patriots were still hurrying to and fro with busy and agitated faces.

Father Paul found his friend anxiously awaiting his return, and the two ensuing hours were spent by these remarkable men in discussions, on which the very existence of their nation depended.

They had both, in early life, had much practice in war, and they were both well acquainted with the resources of the Cantons—no selfish feelings mingled with their devotion of their lives, their talents, and their labours, to the service of their country, and both were by nature prone to hope; yet it was with the deepest anxiety they looked forward to the morrow. In every encounter their troops had hitherto beaten back the enemy with a loss, more than doubling the number of their own slain; but they had no regiments in reserve like the French, countless as the waves of the sea, perpetually to supply all losses; and it was too manifest, for even the most sanguine to overlook, that a succession of such advantages, must ultimately prove the ruin of their cause.

Nothing but a signal and sweeping victory offered a chance of expelling the invader from the land, and to effect this mighty purpose, the deliberations of a council of the principal officers of the Swiss Army, assisted by Father Paul, and other respected churchmen were that night directed. But though men may prepare and act, they all felt that the result of his labours is in the hands of providence and with feelings of the deepest reverence these brave men joined in the prayers offered up by the Hermit, before they dispersed, a little after midnight, to their respective quarters.

CHAPTER IV.

“ O all ye pow’rs who rule above !
O thou, whose very self art love !
Thou know’st my words sincere !
The life blood streaming through my heart,
Or my more dear immortal part,
Is not more fondly dear !”

BURNS.

WALTHER STANZ had been sent only two hours before Justine’s arrival at the camp, with about a dozen mountaineers, to reinforce a detached party which defended a pass a little above Arth. The sun had not yet set, when these brave men reached their point of destination.

It was a narrow ledge of rock almost entirely concealed by brushwood, overhanging a hollow

way, through which not more than three men could march abreast. During the whole of the preceding day and night, the Swiss had there kept watch, and by the galling fire of their rifles alone, these skilful marksmen had three times driven back the French, when they attempted to force the pass.

But their success had not been purchased without loss. Six men had fallen, and the young officer who commanded the party, was shot dead only a few minutes before the arrival of Walther Stanz and his companions. There was no Patrician, nor Burgher there, to take his place; the whole detachment was composed of peasants; men, who like Walther himself, had no authority in the government of the Republic; yet all were ready to die for it, and they were well aware that without a commander it would be impossible to act in concert, or maintain the advantages they had hitherto gained. To send to head quarters would have been a useless waste of time, and from their

own number, therefore, it was expedient that a new leader should be immediately chosen.

By common consent, the choice fell on Walther Stanz. Universally beloved for his kind and generous qualities, no man was jealous of his authority ; and the courage and skill he had already displayed, and the high commendations he had received from Aloys Reding, had created a general respect and confidence in his ability.

His prudent disposition of his little forces for the night, quickly proved the wisdom of their choice, and the ardent and courageous spirit of the young soldier, had an almost marvellous effect in reviving the drooping energies of the weary men he came to succour. For six and thirty hours, but few of them had slept, or tasted food, and his first arrangements were, that whilst he and those who accompanied him there kept guard, these zealous, but exhausted, labourers, should lie down and sleep with their rifles in their hands through the first watch of the night, unless their assistance was absolutely

THE NIGHT OF THE BATTLE

REPORTED TO THEM A SUCCESSFUL ATTACK OF THEIR ENEMIES.

After getting the report of the success of the attack, and through the report of guns that were continually fired, they were convinced that their enemies were yet alive, and that they were still in the ravine, without any attempt being made to force through the defile.

Waither knew that the morning would bring no cessation of hostilities, that his companions who were yet alive, had marched far, and fought hard during the whole of the previous day, and trusting that no attack would be made before dawn, he was unwilling to add needlessly to their fatigue. Having caused a huge watch fire to be lighted on the summit of the rock where he purposed to remain, and stationed a scout on whom he could depend in a tall tree at the entrance of the ravine, he insisted even on the men who followed him thither, lying down to rest, and in less than five minutes, the remainder of his detachment reposed around him,

scattered in various attitudes amidst the long grass and withered fern, in happy forgetfulness of the horrors of war.

But his thoughts were far too busy for sleep. He was not elated by his momentary authority ; the events of the past days, had made him too painfully conscious of his own humble position, and his utter inability, either by talent, or learning, or virtue, to extricate himself from the bondage his humble birth had imposed on him ; he felt that he had all the qualities requisite to command, and yet, save for that brief hour of danger, for life he was doomed to obey. But this was the law of the country he adored, and never for one moment did he mentally question its justice ; he only bitterly lamented that fate had placed him in a class, for which his qualities unfitted him, and as he looked on the simple hearted peasants who slept around, he envied their repose, and lamented that the instructions of Father Paul had opened to his mind a wider range of thought, than their un-

taught and limited perceptions gave them ; and more than all, he felt with deep, unutterable sorrow, the misfortunes and trials in which Justine had been involved by her attachment to him. His uncertainty as to her fate greatly aggravated the pangs of these sad reflections. He scarcely doubted that she was in the power of Michael Graaf—that she would be borne away, like a captive, by her iniquitous uncle, and all chance of their again meeting for ever destroyed ; and young as he was, he experienced that sinking at heart, that conviction that years had no further joy in store for him, so frequently felt in middle life, but rarely in youth, and never in old age, when man clings more to the past than the future. Willingly would he at that minute have laid down his life to have been assured of the safety of Justine, and to have pressed her once more to his heart before he bade farewell to earth. But he knew that could not be, and yielding to a sad presentiment that they were parted for ever, he longed

impatiently for the morrow, hoping that he might then find at least an honourable death upon a field of glory. He then thought of his mother; with tender sadness, but not with such regret as to make him anxious to prolong his life for her sake; much as she loved him, he had often felt that his poor dumb brother was more precious to her than he was, and he knew her industry, and force of character too well, not to feel assured that they would for ever exempt her from want. But when the image of Father Paul arose before him, when he remembered his love, the unwearied kindness with which he had watched over him from childhood, his more than parental anxiety for his virtue, and his welfare, and the confidence reposed in him by the sorrowful old man, who habitually shrunk from human converse, his heart was convulsed with deep emotion, and the conviction rushed upon his mind that he had yet an object to live for, and duties to per-

form in life, even though Justine was never to be his.

The storm was flashing and wildly brattling around him, and as he caught in its flitting lights, a transitory view of the giant mountains, and the huge piles of solemn clouds, that hovered round them, he seemed inspired by the grandeur of the scene, and his mind diverted from its individual cares, vast and unutterable thoughts thronged round him, till he felt that in spite of pride, and of poverty, and of all the countless trammels that men have invented to humiliate each other, there is no real bondage on earth for the soul, which knowledge has taught to feel and estimate the beauties and sublimity of nature; no real humiliation, but that of sin.

No man notes in the progress of life the minute circumstances which unconsciously to himself have influenced a passing train of thought, and frequently thereby changed the whole

future course of his existence. Solitude, or society—the whistling of the wind, or the dropping of a leaf, by suggesting a new idea, not only influences the circumstances of a life, but sometimes changes a man's character for ever, and it was well for Walther, that when left alone that night to reflection, the storm, by lifting his soul to heaven, taught him the true value of the gifts he possessed, and the ingratitude of his despair. Till that hour he had lived for pleasure ; from impulse he had acted right, but his mind had been a wild chaos of feelings and fancies, of bright hopes, and dark despondency. All Father Paul had told him of man's true position as a wayfarer upon earth, had fallen unheeded upon his ear. Youth ever dreams that it shall find exemption from the troubles that the aged have encountered.

But from thenceforward his character was entirely changed ; patiently and cheerfully he lived less for himself, and more for others. He had learnt that all have at times a burthen of

sorrow to bear, against which none should murmur, but look beyond for brighter things, and seek to allay their own anguish, by alleviating the pangs of their fellow sufferers. He felt that he had no right to cast his life away, whilst Father Paul had need of his services, were it only to sit by the dying bed, and close the eyes of the solitary old man, who with unwearied zeal, had supplied to him the care and affection of a father.

Engaged in such reflections he had for a time forgotten the war, and the purpose of his watch, when he was startled from his reverie, by a rustling amongst the underwood behind him. He instantly grasped his rifle, and sprang on his feet, but though he stood intently gazing on the spot from whence the noise proceeded, for several seconds, nothing was to be seen, but the wet leaves of the stunted hollies glittering in the rays of the watch fire, nor a sound to be heard, but the pattering of the rain, that fell thick and fast amidst the boughs. He

would have fired his rifle had he not been restrained by a feeling of compassion for the exhausted sleepers, whom the report would instantly have aroused ; but hearing nothing further, he imagined it had probably been some wild animal stirring amongst the grass, and without other precaution than that of still holding his gun in his hand, he reseated himself on the log he had before occupied, in front of the fire. He knew there was a French regiment not a furlong from the entrance of the pass, from whence, at the beginning of the night, the songs and laughter of the soldiers were frequently borne upon the breeze, but the spot he occupied was perfectly inaccessible from thence, save up the defile where his scout kept watch. There was another path certainly, leading from the Righi, but so rarely trodden, and so completely commanded by the position he occupied, as to render it almost impossible that the enemy would attempt it ; in fact, the

and now the hunter sat down the camp of
 the king.

It was a very strange and somewhat impor-
 tant scene. The young commander stood
 and looked at the king and then again looked
 and then looked. When he was a second time
 looking at a looking, looking, the king, and
 then the king it was he had been at first
 looking. Then the king was up, and point-
 ing his gun to the king, and proposed to fire
 at the king's head. The king, for-
 getting, in the hurry of the moment, that the
 king was not the king of the king, but
 in the upper valley.

For a moment he lowered his gun to wipe
 the sweat from his face : again the branches
 were shaken : again the king was at his shoulder,
 but as the very instant his finger was laid upon
 the trigger, he heard his own name uttered with
 a faint and plaintive cry, that thrilled like elec-
 tricity through his frame ; a female form darted
 from the shadowy boughs, and dashing away

his gun, Walther, the next instant, stood with his arms wrapped around the trembling figure of Justine. Happiness has no words, and it was long till either spoke, but the girl wept, and the soldier kissed away her tears, and both forgot all the world contained save each other. But it was a trance too beautiful to last, amidst the hard world of ambition, and spoliation, and bloodshed that surrounded them, and with a feeling of horror that chilled his very heart, Walther ere long awoke to a sense of their true position, of the death Justine had so narrowly escaped, even from his own hand, and the danger to which her delay, or retreat must equally expose her.

But yet, amidst all this, there was inexpressible joy in his breast. She was still with him—she whose loss had driven him nearly to madness, from whom he believed, so recently, that he was parted for ever in this world, was again restored to him. His arms were around her slender figure, her fair cheek rested on his



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IN SENATE
JANUARY 10, 1906
REPORT
OF THE
COMMISSIONER OF THE
GENERAL LAND OFFICE
IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION
PASSED BY THE SENATE
MAY 1, 1899
AND
CONFIRMED BY THE SENATE
JANUARY 10, 1906
WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1906

BY THE COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE
JANUARY 10, 1906

will never part again; all yesterday I sought for you in vain, and though when I found your mother's dwelling at evening, she made me lie down to rest, and I slept for awhile, I awoke before midnight, in time to see Lena give Fritz a basket of food, and a bundle of cartridges to bring to you. Such a guide was not to be lost, and I escaped unseen from the cottage, and joined him on the way, but when once in the right path, I far outstripped his steps."

"Ah, Justine," returned her lover, "if you could imagine, in the most remote degree, the burthen it has lifted from my heart, to know that you are still amongst us, still free from your uncle's power, it would reward you, I trust, for some of the toil you have endured."

"For all, Walther, and ten times more," she cried. "I am so happy now, I remember not even a footstep of my sad wanderings yesterday. No, no, my troubles are past, I have found you, and we will think no more of sorrow."



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IN SENATE
JANUARY 1, 1901

REPORT
OF THE
COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE
IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE SENATE
MAY 1, 1898

ALBANY:
J. B. LEECH, PRINTER.
1901

THE COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE
HAS THE HONOR TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RECEIPT OF
A COPY OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE
GENERAL LAND OFFICE, IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION
PASSED BY THE SENATE MAY 1, 1898.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL
LAND OFFICE, IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION PASSED
BY THE SENATE MAY 1, 1898, IS HEREBY
FORWARDED TO THE SENATE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH
THE PROVISIONS OF THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879,
AS AMENDED BY THE ACT OF MARCH 3, 1897.

THE COMMISSIONER OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE
HAS THE HONOR TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RECEIPT OF
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PASSED BY THE SENATE MAY 1, 1898.

She only replied by imploring him yet more earnestly, not to send her from him, and for some time he continued vainly to entreat her to depart. But at length, a sudden thought struck him, and he told her, that if she would not return to the camp for her own safety, she could not refuse to do so for his.

"I have a request to send thither," he said, "which Fritz cannot convey, and if you love me, Justine, you will not refuse to be my messenger."

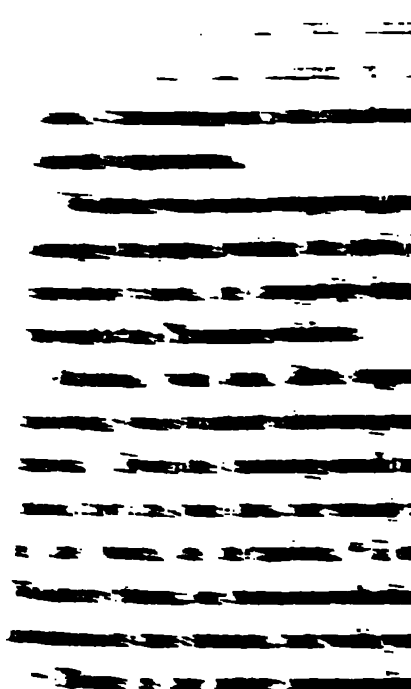
"If it be a true, and real task," she murmured.

"Doubtless it is," Walther rapidly replied, "this post has hitherto been defended by the rifle alone, but from the rumours the men have heard, there is reason to believe that the next attack will be made with more than double the numbers, that have hitherto been brought against it. One cannon will be absolutely necessary to repel them, and if pointed at the defile, would sweep them down like corn before the sickle."

precaution to turn and watch the brake whence the sounds were audible; his gaze was fixed on the dewy eyes of Justine, and she thought only of him. "Be of good cheer, my poor girl," he said, "we have passed through many difficulties without dreaming of the happiness this hour has brought us, and though troubles are yet around our path, I feel that a morning of joy will dawn at length, and the day will arrive, when I shall call you mine for ever and ever."

Whilst Walther thus gave expression to the passionate feelings of his heart, he heeded not the approach of Fritz, though his steps were close behind him, for he knew the poor fellow could hear nothing he uttered, but he started as if a dagger had pierced his side, when a voice that he least of all expected to answer him then responded to his exclamations, by a sarcastic wish that his prophecies might be fulfilled more speedily than he anticipated.

That voice was the voice of Michael Graaf, and the lovers recognized it, with unutterable



"He was shot ere the sun went down, and any business of a public nature you had with him, I am now authorized to transact."

"That is a doubtful matter," said Graaf, in a hesitating tone, "you and he may view things in a different light. He was a cautious young man, and had a fine farm, the French are likely to overrun, and several houses in Lucerne."

"What is that to the purpose?" demanded Walther impatiently.

"Nothing to you, certainly," said Michael, glancing around with evident trepidation, at the sleeping soldiers near, "but they would have spared his property, and paid handsomely besides."

"Pay! pay for what!" cried the mountaineer, "you are ever thinking of money, Michael Graaf; but I tell you once for all, that if you are still in the interests of the invaders, as you have hitherto been, you are not wise in coming here. I marvel the watchman below

did not send a bullet through your brains, as soon as you set foot in the pass."

"I came by the mountain path," answered the Treasurer.

"Then the sooner you return by it the better, we want no traitors in our ranks."

"Walther Stanz, you are a bold man to stand there with my own niece in your arms, whom you have enticed from my roof, and dare to hold such language to me," said Michael, who though still labouring under extreme terror, seemed to have some purpose in view, he was determined to accomplish before he departed.

"It is well for you, Michael Graaf, she is your niece," returned Walther, in a low, stern voice, "for by the saints, were it not so, I would instantly rouse those sleeping men, and give you into custody."

"And much you would gain by that," whispered the Treasurer; "no, no, young man, we have been enemies too long already, but mat-

ters are changed at Lucerne now ; the old fools who found me guilty of robbing the treasury, have gone to prison themselves, and I have every thing my own way."

"What is that to me!" cried the mountaineer impatiently ; "if the French are cheated by your cunning, I am not, and in spite of my forbearance, if you tarry longer here, I must send you a prisoner to Aloys Reding, and he will teach you a different lesson."

"Aloys Reding," muttered Graaf, with a smile of derision, "he will be a prisoner himself to-morrow, and in the mean time, if you are as anxious as you pretend to be, to call Justine your wife, you had better listen to the proposals I came here to make to the young officer you have succeeded."

Walther only bent his head in reply, for he prudently considered, that it would be well to know if treason was on foot, that he might be the better able to take the necessary precautions against it.

“What?”

“The woman who was with you when you were in the hospital?”

“The woman who was with you when you were in the hospital?”

“The woman who was with you when you were in the hospital?”

“The woman who was with you when you were in the hospital?”

To his delight he saw neither surprise, nor indignation pictured there. Nothing but calm curiosity, and rubbing his hands with irrepressable exultation, he continued in full confidence of success, "you are a sensible young man, Walther--very sensible; the French will know far better how to reward your services than Aloys Reding, or any of his beggarly party; moreover, they recognise no distinction between Burghers and Peasants, you will no longer be excluded from a freeman's rights, you will no longer be scoffed at for your humble birth. The French are just, and think all men equal, and when you are my nephew, no man will dare to remember that your father was a bondman, and I will engage you shall have the full benefit of all these liberal arrangements, though to my certain knowledge, had you been made prisoner an hour ago, you would have lost your head to-morrow, for the robbery Father Paul so cunningly had me found guilty of. Yes, Walther, you are wise to listen to me, for though

young men often talk mighty fine, you are brought to confess, sooner or later, that gold covers a multitude of sins."

The heart of the mountaineer heaved high with indignation, whilst he listened to the harangue, so cunningly directed to work on his feelings, and though he suppressed the words of contemptuous wrath which hurried tumultuously to his lips, he could not keep down the fiery current that rushed to his face, nor still the tremour of passion that convulsed his frame. He knit his brows, he unconsciously grasped the hand of Justine with nervous violence, but he heard her low whisper of terror, he thought of his country, and forgot himself, mastering the impulse which made him prompt to take revenge on the traitor for his blooded insult, by hurling him headlong from the precipice, he inquired in a smothered, almost inaudible voice, how all this could be accomplished.

"Have I not told you?" returned his temper-

ter ; " by giving up this important post at dawn, without further bloodshed, to the enemy."

" It is assuredly a service that deserves a large hire," replied Walther, as if hesitating how to act. " It commands the whole valley !"

" Yes, it is the very key of the district," answered Michael.

" Once in possession of this pass, the French could without danger, gain the rear of Aloys Redding and his army, and cut them off to a man."

" In two hours he would be surrounded, the insurgents compelled to capitulate, and the war at an end."

" I know it perfectly, Michael Graaf," returned his listener, " and must be paid accordingly."

" Have I not promised ? twenty thousand livres, the girl, and my inheritance."

" What have you done with Staffer ?" inquired Walther coolly.

" Oh, we can easily have him knocked on

THE HISTORY OF THE CITY

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“Of course not! I will be there to introduce you to the General, who will receive you with open arms. You are a wise young man, Walther Stanz, and I rejoice at your decision. But I must be off with all speed. I shall see you after the battle, to settle our reckoning, and in the meantime, had not Justine better come with me. This is an awkward place for a young maiden, when armies are marching to and fro.”

“Ha!” exclaimed Walther bitterly, “is that a part of your conditions, old man?”

“Oh, on, no,” returned Michael quickly, “not at all. I only propose it for her own advantage—for her own safety.”

“But if there is to be no firing?—”

“So the General has promised, but in these cases it is best to guard against accidents.”

“I am quite of your opinion,” answered Walther, “and if Justine is willing to accept your protection—”

“Oh, never, never, I would rather die!” exclaimed the terrified girl, in a voice so loud,

THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.

TO THE DIRECTOR, UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
RE: [REDACTED]

THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.
[REDACTED]

THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.
[REDACTED]

THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
WASHINGTON, D. C.
[REDACTED]

I marvel such a cunning man could be so easily deluded."

"Ah, my precious Justine," said her lover "you judged me by your own pure heart, Michael Graaf by the measure of his own iniquity. Methinks I see the hand of Providence in this discovery. Aloys Reding must be informed of it; my men must be doubled, and though there were but one cannon in the army, hither it must be brought, and I will give the traitor a reception such as he deserves. Now Justine, now I know you will no longer insist on lingering here; you see the mighty service you can do, not only to me, but to your country. The lives of thousands, nay the very existence of the whole army, depends upon your speed. Your will, I do not doubt; but your strength, my poor girl, after all you have undergone, is I fear little fitted for the task that Providence has imposed upon you. You must find either the General or Father Paul, and inform them of the meditated treason, of my want of men—of cartridges—and above all, of a cannon."

THE FIRST PART

OF THE HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

THE SECOND PART

OF THE HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

CHAPTER V.

This day thou promisest
To die when honour calls thee, for thy faith,
—— ———— and for thy native land ;
The duties which at birth we all contract
Are by the high profession of this hour
Made thine especially.

SOUTHEY,—RODERICK.

MANY thoughts thronged on the mind of Justine, as she speeded on her way, and aware that the safety of Walther probably depended on the success of her mission, she was deeply anxious ; yet her heart was lightened of a load of care. She no longer felt bereaved and oppressed by the agony of loneliness, and joyous to labour for him she loved, she neither heeded the difficulty, nor the length of the way.



the hills, led over open meadow
tures. The watch fires of the
around her, but as she knew the
the army, though she was occ
lenged by the sentinels, she w
proceed without molestation. T
far advanced, and as she hurri
glanced perpetually at the east,
self that no faint reflection of th
yet gleamed athwart its clouds.
vanished, and intensely she long
her companion, as to the flight of

Sometimes she spoke to him, l
signs he might be able to tell if h
late the hour by the distance they
but his only answer was an unm

heart with awe, and as she saw the moon sinking beneath the horizon, and remembered the helplessness of her companion, and the armed crowds amidst which at that late hour of the night she was passing, without any other protection than her devoted zeal, her courage failed her for a moment; but it was only for a moment, and after murmuring a short prayer, hope once more, like a guiding angel, returned to sustain her drooping spirit.

She had proceeded more than two miles, and the pale stars were the only light in heaven, when she was startled, and somewhat dismayed by the sound of footsteps rapidly approaching her. But still she continued to advance, till challenged by the deep, low voice of a man, who with a woman at his side, stood directly in her path.

“Father Paul! what lucky chance has brought you hither?” she exclaimed with a joyous heart, the instant she recognised the well known tones of the Hermit.

"Is it possible you have returned!" cried Lena and the priest almost at the same moment.

"Have you seen Walther?"

"Yes," she replied, "and he has sent me to tell you, Father Paul, or Aloys Reding, that he has discovered, that the French intend attacking the pass he guards, at break of day, with two thousand men, whilst the main body of their army marches openly against our General. There has been treason at work, but not a gun will be fired till sunrise, and he feels confident of being able to repel the enemy, if he receives a small reinforcement, and a fresh supply of cartridges ere then; but above all, he is most earnest to have one cannon brought to bear upon the hollow way, through which the enemy purposes to advance."

"You tell strange things, Justine," returned the Hermit, "it was Ernest Berens that had command of that outpost, whither Walther was sent, and yet you speak only of Walther."

"I saw him there alone," replied the maid,

“but I believe the officer you speak of is dead, and if I understand rightly, Walther has been raised to the command in his stead.”

“But you mentioned treason.”

“Yes. Berens was a traitor, suborned by my uncle Graaf, to deliver up his post at dawn to the French. The Treasurer came under the veil of night, to conclude their bargain, and found Walther in his place. He pretended to listen to his offers, and thus learnt the whole of their designs.”

“And you were there, Justine?”

“And heard it all; but my uncle was alone, and did not molest me. But now, Father Paul, where are the men, and the cartridges, and the cannon to be procured?”

“I will return to head quarters, in search of the two first,” said Father Paul, “but as for cannon there are but five in our possession. One of the field pieces must be taken from the entrenchment, a mile lower down the valley, but how it is to be dragged to the high ground,

that Walther Stanz defends, I know not; we cannot spare men for such labours, and the few horses we have are already employed."

"Leave that to me," cried Lena. "I and the other women, placed it where it is, and with Fritz, and Justine's help, even if we meet no assistance by the way, I will engage it shall be dragged over the rocks, and ready to send its balls dancing amongst the ranks of the French, before a gleam of sunshine is above the horizon."

"Justine is scarcely equal to such a task," rejoined the Hermit.

"I am strong now," cried the girl, "and shall rejoice in the labour."

"As men cannot be spared, the attempt must be made," said Father Paul, "so I will go with you, to the next watch fire, and write an order for the commander of the battery, to allow you to remove one of the cannon, and if after we part, I meet any women, I will send them to your assistance."

“ All this was speedily done, and the Hermit then returned to the quarters of Aloys Reding, and the women and Fritz turned their steps towards the entrenchment.

They fortunately met three stout shepherdesses on their way, who had been to one of the outposts with the scanty provisions they had been able to collect for their husbands. One had an infant of six weeks old in her arms, yet all cheerfully agreed to accompany the little party, and assist in their arduous task.

The spirit of resistance to the invaders, was not like the wind blowing only from one point, but like the rays of an unclouded sun, was universally diffused through every heart in the forest Cantons ; ordinary difficulties seemed only to excite the courage and perseverance of this determined people, who, though they had nothing to gain by the war, felt they had every thing to lose by defeat.

The women, not content with suffering every

possible hardship and deprivation without murmur, toiled with unwearied assiduity, at the tasks to which their strength was adequate and Lena brave and determined as she was, was equalled in courage and activity by many of her own sex, during the eventful days of that afflict-
ing war.

Neither horse, nor woman, came from Father Paul, but the cannon was immediately confided to the Shepherdess, in compliance with his order, and the five females without other aid than that of Fritz, speedily commenced its removal.

Two strong ropes remained attached to it, and three of the party yoked themselves to each. At first their work was comparatively easy, for the way lay over nearly level ground, but ere long as the path grew steeper and steeper, their pace proportionally relaxed till at length masses of rock, and fallen trees, frequently obstructed the passage and compelled them to

pause, that they might take breath and gather strength, for some new and difficult effort.

The stars faded entirely from the sky, whilst they were thus employed; far and near they heard the horns calling the soldiers to their ranks, and then the measured tread of the regiments as they passed beneath, to the battle field; yet weary and exhausted they had accomplished little more than two thirds of the way, when Justine with consternation beheld the first pale streaks of dawn above the western hills.

"Oh, Lena! Lena!" she exclaimed, "we shall be too late, he will be overwhelmed by the multitude, and all will be lost."

"Not a gun has yet been fired," returned the shepherdess, "and the light will much assist us. If we were once over that rock at the foot of the old pine, the rest of the road is easy." But to surmount this difficulty with their heavy burthen, proved a task far more arduous, than any these poor women had yet encountered, and after two, or three vain efforts to drag the

cannon up the most accessible part of the precipice, all of them overcome by their fruitless toil, were compelled for a time to desist. Drooping and desponding, Justine looked to Lena for consolation, but the shepherdess had none to offer.

The women who had hitherto assisted, sat down exhausted on the ground, and the maiden stood with her hands clasped, gazing in agony on the feathery rays of the approaching sun, that shot high into the vault of heaven.

There was a deep pause, till Lena suddenly sprang forward, and exclaimed, "it is folly to tarry here. Surely Walther can spare three of his men at least, when we have brought the gun so near his station, and then the difficulty will be overcome in five minutes."

"I can run quicker than you!" cried Justine, and before the Shepherdess could reply, she had darted away, and was quickly lost to their sight.

The minutes appeared more than ten times their length, whilst Lena awaited her return,

and again and again she reproached herself for allowing the poor girl to go alone on her errand. At length the agony of suspense more harrowing than despair, so entirely overcame her, that unable longer to endure it in idleness, she had resolved to follow in quest of her, when loud shouts rang from the copse above, and in another minute, Justine, and three of Walther's band, stood on the summit of the rock, which like a barrier in the middle of the path, had obstructed their progress.

The difficulty was now speedily surmounted, the Shepherdess attached ropes to the ends and middle of the cannon, and the men aided by the women below, quickly dragged it up the face of the rock. A shout of triumph announced its arrival on the platform above, and that had died away, and the whole party had resumed their progress, when one of the men hastily demanded if they had brought any bullets?

With dismay Justine looked at Lena, but

she was quickly reassured by her saying, that during her absence, she had sent Fritz back in search of them, and as he would return by a shorter path, he would probably reach the outpost as soon as they should, whilst no doubt, as the commander of the battery would understand the emergency of the case, he would send some of the women with a further supply.

They had scarcely ceased speaking, when the golden sun in all his glory rushed up the eastern sky, gilding the heavens and the tall summits of the purple mountains, and bathing in light the silvery mists that hung like a wide canopy above the valley, concealing from their anxious sight the martial hosts of France and Switzerland, which were there preparing for combat.

In another minute, sudden and loud as the quick crash of thunder, burst on the ear, the simultaneous discharge of innumerable rifles, at the distance of only a few hundred paces.

The mountains caught the sound, and dashed it back with louder din from echo to echo, but long before the reverberation died away, it was answered by a second discharge of guns.

"On, on, we are too late!" cried Justine, almost maddened by the sounds, "the attack has begun, the French are already in the pass! on, on, for your lives, or every thing will be lost."

"There is no fear of that, whilst our men are pouring down bullets on the Frenchmen's heads in that fashion," replied one of the soldiers, "don't you hear? our rifles never stop for a moment, and since we were reinforced, there are more than a hundred men, now there, all ready to die with Walther Stanz. The cannon will make matters surer certainly, so push on, and in three minutes, we shall finish our journey."

The soldier kept his word; in three minutes the cannon was dragged over the embers of Walther's watch-fire, to the edge of the cliff, where Justine parted with him the night before;

but not a creature was there. The young commander and his hundred followers were all stationed in different parts of the pass, from whence their bullets could take more prompt effect, and the three men who had been of such assistance in the transport of the cannon, hastily snatching up their rifles, and leaving Lena a supply of powder, told her she must manage to fire as well as she could, for they were wanted elsewhere.

The Shepherdess was fully capable of the task they assigned her, and as Fritz had not yet arrived, she supplied the want of balls with the stones scattered over the precipice, and having ascertained the exact position of the French, when the flash of their muskets momentarily dispersed the cloud that hung above them, she levelled the cannon to the best of her ability, by the help of a fragment of rock, and then standing aside, without fear or trembling, applied the end of a lighted pine branch to the touch hole. Never was a sound more

welcome to human ear than the loud din that followed, to Walther Stanz and his companions. From that moment they felt secure of victory, and when Lena, continually supplied with ammunition by Fritz and the women who had returned with him, kept up a well directed and unintermitting discharge on the narrow file of the enemy, that was wedged in the hollow way beneath, the French believed that a strong battery had opened fire upon them. The dense morning mist, and the clouds of smoke concealed every object from their view, and Walther Stanz having permitted them to advance unsuspecting of danger into the very heart of the pass, before a gun was fired by his men, their surprise and complete ignorance of the numbers of their invisible assailants greatly increased their terror and consternation. It was in vain they returned the fire of the Swiss; not a living creature was to be seen, and whilst the riflemen on every side, hid amongst the trees that clothed the steep banks of the defile, took

unerring aim at their exposed ranks, and brought down file after file, their own harmless bullets only rattled amongst the dry branches of the pines, or bounded uselessly from rock to rock.

The balls directed by Lena made fearful havock, yet still the French advanced; eager for conquest they for some time readily believed their officer's assurances that this unexpected reception originated in a mistake which would speedily be rectified; and even when these promises were proved vain, and every step they trod evidently increased the danger of their position, these brave fellows were unwilling to retreat, for, conscious of their superiority in numbers and discipline, they did not despair of ultimate success, and hoped by gaining the rear of the Swiss to turn their battery against themselves, and drive them from their formidable position.

But Walther Stanz was not thus to be foiled. Calm and collected at that important crisis, his powerful intellect seemed for the first time

called into full activity, by the dangers and difficulties which surrounded him. There was a clearness, promptitude, and decision in his commands, that made his men forget his humble birth, and rely on him at that perilous hour, as they would on a being of a superior order.

And Walther well deserved this confidence. Whilst his bearing was that of a man born to command, it was neither haughty nor presumptuous, and so fully was his mind absorbed by the vast interests that were committed to his charge, that he was unconscious of his authority, except as a means for executing the plans he had devised for the repulse of the French. No sooner did he perceive the havoc made by a single cannon, and the perseverance with which the French pressed forward in defiance of the unforeseen dangers which surrounded them, than however unwilling to lose the service of a single rifle, he despatched three men, to bring another if possible to the same point.

In the meantime as the enemy advanced, he

and his sharp shooters on both sides of the valley, continued to retreat, so as to maintain a perpetual fire, not only on their flank, but on their front.

The pass grew steeper and steeper, the progress of the French every moment more difficult, and the ravine was encumbered with their dead. Though the ranks were promptly filled up from behind, yet the men lost courage. Scarcely one of those who in the foremost lines first entered the defile, remained alive, yet the destructive fire, as unceasing as ever, still poured in upon them from rock, and bush, and tree, till at length convinced that instead of outstripping their invisible enemies, they should only entangle themselves more inextricably in the fastnesses of the mountain, consternation became general. Several vain attempts were made to dislodge the Swiss from their lurking places, but always with increased loss, and the officers at length dismayed by the extent of the

carnage, when they had expected a bloodless victory, unwillingly commanded a retreat.

But it was too late, the rear of the detachment, ignorant of what had passed in front, and utterly despising the undisciplined mountaineers, even when they heard that an unexpected resistance had been made, and animated rather than disheartened, by the sound of the guns, pressed on with ungovernable impetuosity, eager to share the victory with their comrades, till nearly two thousand men were wedged in that narrow defile.

When the order to retire passed from rank to rank, so utterly unprepared were they for defeat, or even repulse, that in defiance of their officers, numbers still pressed forward, till they were completely entangled with the front ranks, which with scarcely a pretence of order, were retreating in terror and dismay, over the bodies of the slain, whilst the galling fire of the Swiss closed in nearer and nearer upon them every step they receded. As at the confluence of two

adverse currents, the wildest confusion prevailed; men scarcely knew their friends from enemies; some utterly bewildered, fired amongst their own ranks, others flung away their arms, and strove to fly, but so thick was the crowd, and so narrow the way, that numbers were thrown down and trodden underfoot; whilst the cannon which Lena continually brought to bear upon the flying ranks, and Walther's unwearied riflemen, made perpetual havock amongst the terrified and defenceless mass.

Had these unfortunate beings not been the unprovoked enemies of his country, the young commander would have been horrified by the sight of their sufferings, and the destruction of human life his precaution had effected, but even his consciousness of the horrors they had brought upon his land, could not make him forget, that many of the victims, had blindly been made the tools of tyranny, and a sober sadness tempered his exultation for the victory he had won.

But he was too wise to damp the spirit of his men by any expression of his pity, and aware that no advantage over an enemy, so far surpassing the Swiss in numbers, was to be thrown away, from any misplaced feeling of compassion, he zealously urged them to continue the pursuit to the very verge of the plain, where the want of covert to conceal the weakness of his force, rendered it imprudent to advance.

But so slow was the entangled retreat of the French, that the morning had far advanced, before the last of their men escaped the fatal pass, leaving their dead to the mercy of the victors, or the wild eagles that, already attracted by the prey, were hovering over the surrounding rocks.

The mists had cleared away, but shut out by low hills from the valley of Goldau, the first intimation that Walther Stanz received of the engagement of the main armies on the field of Morgarten was when, in the silence of his own guns, he heard the distant cannonading echoing from the

Rossberg. Yet even after his victory was complete, he felt it was impossible to march to the assistance of Aloys Reding with his little force, lest by a premature and imprudent desertion of the post he had so gallantly defended, the advantages resulting from his success, might be entirely lost ; until certain therefore, that no second attack would be made, he resolved, however unwillingly, to remain at his present post, where his first care was to place scouts on all the most commanding points. His next was to bury the dead.

Three large graves were quickly dug in the valley, and when the bodies were collected, he found with surprise and even horror, that they amounted to three hundred and fifteen men, many of them mere youths. He had no priest to officiate, but before the earth was strewn upon these poor victims in their rugged bed, the young commander knelt upon the turf, and surrounded by the pious and kind hearted peasantry who had that day done him such

good service, offered up a prayer for their souls.

Tears filled the eyes of many of these brave men, as they shovelled the earth over the slain, for some were fathers who had young sons engaged in the war, others thought what might ere long be their own fate, and moreover there is a natural clinging in the human heart to an individual grave, and a decent burial, that makes the most courageous, who gaze upon death unappalled, turn with horror from the fearful spectacle of such an uncoffined multitude.

This mournful, but necessary task performed, Walther then ordered the small store of provision the late commander had provided, to be brought forth from the hollow tree, where it was concealed, and sharing it equally amongst his friends and followers, they sat down on the rocks, to refresh themselves with the scanty fare; but though spare and coarse, each man felt with exultation, that it had been gloriously earned, and before a morsel of bread was

broken, thanks was returned to the Almighty, for the merciful preservation vouchsafed to them that day.

Then, in few but eloquent words, Walther thanked them for all they had done, for him, and for their country.

“ I claim no authority,” he said, “ but that you have been pleased to bestow upon me, in the hour of danger. My humble birth incapacitates, me by the laws of our land, from holding any public office, and now when the hour of need is past, I resign my brief command to those who gave it. Doubtless one better fitted to hold the station of your leader will shortly be sent here from the camp, and I had rather resign to you the honours I derived from your favour, than be stripped of them by a superior. You have obeyed me as your leader in battle, but that is past, and I am now your equal.”

“ You are still our commander—we will have no other—it is at his peril who presumes to

displace you," cried every voice, and it was in vain that Walther repeatedly attempted to convince his grateful companions, of the impossibility of his retaining his authority. They said he was fit to direct a campaign, that danger levelled all distinctions, and provided a man was born in the mountains, it was no matter at such a crisis whether he was a bondman, or a Burgher; till finding opposition useless, and believing that in the absence of a superior officer his services might still be of material use, he consented, in compliance with their wishes, to retain his command, until he was superseded by a man of higher rank, and longer experience.

To this condition his soldiers paid no heed, contented, at all hazards, that he consented for the present, to retain the authority they had bestowed on him. The loud shout that hailed his decision, would have been gratifying to any man; but to Walther, young, ambitious, and enthusiastic, yet bitterly conscious of his humble station, it was fraught with many feelings of

proud satisfaction, and his rapture was too great for utterance, when he heard the voice of Justine mingling in the acclamations, and, raising his eyes, beheld her standing with Lena on the platform of the rocks above, waving her handkerchief with wild delight at beholding her lover's triumph.

He little knew who had laboured to serve the cannon that day, or his thoughts would have been less collected in the battle; he little knew, that the bullets of the French often during the course of the struggle, bounded over the head of Justine, or his own aim would have proved less sure, and though her image had often recurred to his mind, it was happily without a knowledge of her danger, and never for one instant had he allowed it to interfere with his important duties; but now they were at an end, and heedless of all but the maiden, he uttered a broken cry of surprise and pleasure, and rushed up the rocks to join her.

Justine met him half way, where no eyes

were upon them, and whilst the soldiers below were discussing the events of the combat, they enjoyed, with Lena and Fritz, a brief half hour of rest and happiness. Such a passage of joy in that wild and troubled scene, like the rainbow on the foam of the stormy sea, was more bright from the surrounding horrors; but it was scarcely less brief than the sparkling hues of the crested wave, and the tranquillity of the little party was speedily dispelled by a messenger, who breathless with speed, came from the main army with an order from Aloys Reding, that every man that could be spared, should be despatched with all haste to his assistance, and the cannon, if possible, removed to a position at the opposite side of the valley.

Instantly did Walther start up, and, forgetful of all his private feelings, prepare to obey. Relying on the conviction that no further attempt would that day be made upon the pass, he determined to leave only twenty men for its defence, under the command of an old veteran

upon whose prudence and foresight he could especially depend. His mother, and her female companions undertook the removal of the cannon, and Walther, without hesitation or mistrust, confided in their promises. Justine alone was silent, and sad; she knew it was vain to hope any longer to share her lover's danger, and even the words of comfort he breathed into her ear, before they parted, failed to bring a smile to her dejected countenance. But she neither wept, nor murmured; she knew it was his duty to depart, and that it was cruel needlessly to add, by her sorrow, to the pain their separation caused him.

But no sooner was he gone, than she climbed to the top of a cliff that commanded a view of the road he traversed, and there continued to watch the progress of the little band towards the clouds of smoke that hung above the field of Morgarten, long after the person of Walther was undistinguishable even to her eager eyes; and not till Lena came with kind anxiety in

search of her, did the necessity for accompanying the other women, for once occur to her mind. The Shepherdess well knew that occupation was the best medicine for her troubled heart, and assigning her such a task, as her strength was equal to, she did not again allow her, during the progress of that day, to brood in idleness over her sorrow.

There was scarcely one of Justine's companions, whose anxiety was not equal to her own; each had lovers, or husbands, or kindred in the battle; yet with bitter anguish in their breasts, they continued their toil, for it was in aid of those they loved, and whilst the courage of the men was animated by their devotion to their country and its ancient laws, the indefatigable industry of the women was the result of affection alone.

“ My heart did glowing transport feel,
To see a race heroic wheel,
And brandish round the deep dy’d steel !
In sturdy blows,
While back recoiling, seem’d to reel,
Their suthron foes.”

When morning dawned, it became evident that a general and decisive engagement could no longer be delayed. Both Generals accord-

ingly disposed their troops in order of battle, before the rise of sun. The line of the French army stretched across the whole of the lower end of the valley from Arth to Morgarten, and the experienced eye of Aloys Reding quickly discerned, that the number of the brave, and highly disciplined army drawn out against him, was more than four times that of the irregular, though gallant patriots under his own command. But he was not disheartened, and his scouts no sooner brought him exact information concerning the movements of General Schauenberg, than he determined at once to attack him in the position he had chosen, rather than allow the spirits of his own men to evaporate by delay. He knew that the very impetus of their own motion, gives the attacking party an advantage, and moreover that he could not remain stationary without imminent risk of being surrounded by the long line of the French, which appeared ready to coil around him.

But his numbers were inadequate to strike at

once upon the whole of this wide front, and he decided to make three distinct attacks. That on the main body, with the principal strength of his army under his own command; the charges on the left, and right, he confided to two officers who had already greatly distinguished themselves, and leaving only a small party in reserve, ready to afford prompt assistance when necessary to either of these divisions, he walked from rank to rank ere they separated, to excite to the utmost the enthusiasm of his soldiers. He briefly recalled to their remembrance, the glories their ancestors had won on the same battle field, they were now once more about to contest with the army of an unjust invader, which like that of the conquered Austrians, in former years, far outnumbered their own; and reminded them of the deep interests of themselves and their descendants, that were to be decided by the event of the approaching engagement.

But his words scarcely added to the excite-

ment that before prevailed, and convinced that if moral strength could supply the want of numbers, the triumph of that day was secure, Aloys Reding placed himself at the head of his own chosen guard, with more sanguine hopes as to the result of the war, than he had previously ventured to indulge.

When all was ready to march, at the very moment when the sun rising above the mountain and dispersing the mists of the morning shone full on the anxious multitude, Marianus Herzoq, the curate of Einselden, and Paul Styger appeared on a small mound in front of the ranks. Blessing the standards, they promised the joys of heaven to those who should die in their defence, and with bitter imprecations against the impious invaders, whose wickedness they declared could not fail to awaken the wrath of heaven, they hurled the thunders of the Church against them.

A wild clatter of arms, and the simultaneous shouts of the multitude, responded to this ad-

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be addressed. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

2. Next, it is essential to gather relevant information and data. This can be done through research, consultation with experts, or by analyzing existing resources.

3. Once the information is gathered, the next step is to analyze it. This involves identifying patterns, trends, and key factors that influence the outcome.

4. After analysis, a plan or strategy should be developed. This plan should outline the steps to be taken, the resources required, and the timeline for completion.

5. The final step is to implement the plan. This involves executing the tasks, monitoring progress, and making adjustments as needed to ensure the goal is achieved.

1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

2. Once the problem is identified, the next step is to define the objectives and goals of the project. This helps to clarify what needs to be achieved and provides a clear direction for the team.

3. The third step is to develop a plan or strategy to address the problem. This involves breaking down the problem into smaller, manageable tasks and determining the resources needed to complete each task.

4. The fourth step is to implement the plan. This involves putting the strategy into action and monitoring progress regularly to ensure that the project is on track.

5. The final step is to evaluate the results of the project. This involves assessing the outcomes against the objectives and goals and identifying any areas for improvement or further action.

he despised, and in every manœuvre that ensued, he was uniformly unsuccessful. The promptitude, skill and courage of his opponents foiled every attempt he made to drive them from their ground.

Irritated by such an unexpected resistance, General Schauenberg at length resolved to strike a most decided blow, and placing himself at the head of a body, of at least four thousand men, he bore down at full speed upon the enemy's centre.

With the rapidity of lightning the Swiss General converted his lines into three squares to receive him, and though the charge was like a torrent, it proved more sanguinary to the assailants than the assailed. There was a momentary confusion in the front ranks of the Swiss squares, but the reserve, from behind a low wall, promptly threw in a galling fire upon the hostile force, and such was the skill of these admirable marksmen, that more than a hundred men fell at their first discharge. It was instan-

taneously repeated with almost equal effect, and the squares having by this time rallied, and commenced an equally destructive fire, wide gaps appeared in the French ranks, after every successive volley, till utterly disheartened, the attempts of their officers to incite them to charge with the bayonet, proved ineffectual; panic struck, many threw down their arms and fled, and though for a time some show was made of prolonging the attack, the rout ere long became general.

Vainly did General Schauenberg expect to see his regiments deploy in the rear of the enemy, from the pass he flattered himself that treachery had secured. The continued roll of the guns in that direction, fatally convinced him that all hope from that quarter was in vain, and cursing Michael Graaf for having deluded him to divide his army at such a time, he vowed vengeance against the smooth tongued deceiver, whom he no longer doubted to be a traitor to the cause he pretended so zealously to espouse.

The right wing of the Swiss was in the mean time equally successful in their attack on another part of the enemy's line. Nothing could resist their impetuosity ; again and again they broke the compact ranks of the enemy with the bayonet, till completely dismayed, when the new battery was opened on their flank, and Walther Stanz appeared descending the hills, with a reinforcement whose numbers terror magnified, they retreated in confusion, and the gallant mountaineers, after a day of incredible fatigue, every where remained masters of the field.

But it was a fearful victory. Ten times the number of their own dead were slain in the ranks of their enemies, but their loss was irreparable ! many of the peasants had had no rest, and very little food, for three or four days and nights, and when the first flush of triumph had passed away, it was but too evident, to those even of the most sanguine spirit, that resistance under such circumstances, could not long be protracted.



them, to attend upon the wounded at the camp.

Both the women received his tidings with unspeakable joy, and notwithstanding the labour they had that day undergone, followed him with light hearts to perform the painful task assigned them.

As they passed up the valley, they were overtaken by a party of soldiers, returning from the field of Morgarten, and they had scarcely time to stand aside, ere Walther Stanz himself marched past them at the head of the brave fellows, who had so gallantly assisted him in the defence of the pass. They were on their way to receive the thanks of the General, in the presence of the whole army, which owed its preservation to their valour.

Walther saw and recognised his friends, who quickly followed in the rear of the party, and when loud acclamations rent the air, on his approach to head quarters, the proud exultation of his heart was redoubled by the con-

one atom in her esteem, by this public acknowledgment of his merits ; she had always thought he surpassed all other human beings, and she had loved him with her whole soul, when no one else had regarded him ; but still her heart exulted at his triumph, whom she fondly wished that every living creature should admire as much as herself, and whilst his praises rang in loud acclamations around, she silently felt with unutterable and almost overpowering delight, that he was hers, and hers only, for ever and for ever.

Aloys Reding was fully sensible that the preservation of the whole army was due to this young man's talent and virtue ; but highly as he estimated his signal services, the laws of his country did not permit him to reward one of such humble birth, with any command of importance, and in that crisis, he knew the Swiss aristocracy were peculiarly tenacious of their exclusive rights, which the invaders professedly came to destroy.

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weary even of the contentions in his own camp, where all were too much on an equality, for the frequent clashing of adverse interests and opinions to be avoided. But a council was to be held that night, where his presence was not only required to assist the deliberations by his wisdom, but to prevent dissension between the contending advocates for peace and war, by the influence of his powerful and holy character. It was with a sad heart, the Hermit parted with the children of his affections, and watched them till the gloom of twilight hid them from his sight, slowly winding their way amongst the hills.

His anxiety was increased, when, on surveying even from that distance, the position whither their steps were directed, he distinctly saw that a sudden movement of the enemy might entirely cut them off from all communication with their friends below; and deprive them even of the possibility of obtaining food; and with that mournful conviction, that every

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fair spirit, and could lie down in the grave in peace !”

The Hermit was alone—all was darkness, save where the last reflection of the crimson sunset still lingered in the sky, and the watch fires began on mountain and in vale, to start up like spirits in the deepening gloom. Scattered mists were drifting by him on the evening breeze, and as he stood watching in the west for his favourite star of promise, a shadowy vapour arose like a living thing between him and the last faint glimmerings of departing day.

None but Father Paul could have seen the lovely form, that, clothed in brightness, was visible to him, by the halo of its own glory, amidst that floating veil; none but Father Paul could have beheld the radiant countenance that beamed upon him there; none ever did; for its type existed only in his own brain, but he saw it—he knew it, and the smile of the lovely lips sunk deep into his heart, as a theme for

future exultation. It was no longer sad, but beaming with all the seraphic beauty of perfect and ineffable bliss.

No sound fell upon his ear, save a rushing, as of heavenly wings, and the figure beckoned him away, as if to share her home beyond the skies.

He started forward—he stretched his arms towards it, with a wild cry of ecstasy, but even as he seemed to reach it, it vanished; and there was nothing to be seen, but his own beautiful star, shining with intense lustre in the cloudless sky.

“Bright world,” he murmured, “it is to thy regions of eternal bliss she beckons me! there, my spirit freed from the encumbrances of sinful matter, and earthly griefs forgotten, I may yet be made worthy to taste the rapture of thy eternal presence!”

The Hermit ceased, but it was long till his excited mind returned to the business of this world; and most unwillingly it did so! but

when the roll of the drum, and the mournful echoes of the soldiers horns, first broke on his half bewildered senses, it was with a sensation of extreme agony, that he remembered their import. He felt like one who is awakened from a dream of heaven, to tread the dark way to a scaffold.

One moment was given to regret; one moment to the longing aspirations of his soul, and then breathing a prayer to heaven, that it would strengthen him to do its pleasure, the powerful intellect of the old man shook off the mists of imagination, and descending by one great effort from the ideal to the real world, he turned his footsteps towards the cottage, where the council of the Swiss officers was appointed to be held.

None, who there that night heard his wisdom, could have been persuaded by any ordinary testimony to believe, that this sage and prudent counsellor, this man, deep read in all the mysteries of the human heart, skilled to unravel the intrigues of cabinets, and possessed of



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CHAPTER VII.

"I will indeed no longer endure it. Nor am I yet persuaded, to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered. Your words and your performances are no kin together."

SHAKESPEARE—OTHELLO

WHEN Hans Brunk, finding his valour did not suffice to meet the invaders in open warfare, had deserted Justine at the confines of the Swiss camp, he continued to hover around the neighbourhood, in pursuance of the little individual interests which reigned paramount in his heart.

Gain was decidedly his first pursuit. To

from the officers' garments, and altogether, during the few days he prosecuted his new calling, he contrived to amass more wealth than he had previously been able to scrape together during the whole of his laborious life.

There was another reason besides his love of money that also made him take peculiar pleasure in this pursuit, which without exposing him to danger, kept him in the neighbourhood of the hostile forces. He liked to know every thing that was going on.

It had always been his favourite recreation to hear, and carry news, and the little man would have set small value on existence, had he been debarred the use of his ears. Whilst employed by Father Paul and Michael Graaf, on their respective missions to the contending parties, and at the very fountain head of all intelligence, he had been the happiest man alive, and now when no longer actually an agent of intrigue, he would infallibly have died of curiosity, had he not found the means of appeasing his thirst

for information, by enacting the part of spy upon both armies, though without fee, or reward from either party.

Known to several of the French officers during his former visits to Berne, and speaking their language fluently, he frequently contrived to make his way into the very centre of their troops, and to gain a knowledge of some of their most secret designs, without any suspicion being entertained, of a fellow, apparently so simple and undesigning.

To his justice it must be admitted, that though idle curiosity might be his sole motive for acquiring information, he never failed to use it for the benefit of his country, and several successful manœuvres of the Swiss army, were mainly owing to the intelligence he had conveyed to the General.

His affection for his sister and her sons, was another reason why he lingered near the camp. He loved Walther as much as he could love anything, and meant to make him his heir,

which resolution was ever an all sufficient excuse to himself, for any extraordinary act of rapacity and meanness.

“The young fellow will never save anything for himself,” he thought, “and so I must do it for him,” and he sincerely believed, this was the principal motive of his economy, and loved his nephew all the better for affording him such a plausible pretence for the exercise of his favourite propensity.

Provisions of all kinds were very scarce in the camp; Hans well knew this, and he spared no pains to collect a tolerable supply for Lena, and her sons, whilst they were engaged in the labours of war, and to him they were entirely indebted for the scanty store they carried with them to the mill upon the Rossberg, on the evening after the battle of Morgarten.

Thitner unseen he saw them depart, and then anxious to ascertain the effect produced upon the enemy, by that day's victory, he turned his steps towards the French camp.



He stopped to listen; a glimmering flame was momentarily visible, as the breeze parted the high rushes, amidst which he lay. Cautiously he changed his position, and still unseen drew nearer to the fire, till the speakers were only a few paces from him, and their words distinctly audible. They spoke not in French, but German.

But still he was not satisfied, till by another slight movement, he obtained a sight of their persons, and in the light of a fire of dried branches and withered leaves, saw them as plainly as in the rays of noon. The one was Staffer—the other Michael Graaf. Hans was astonished to see the change that had taken place in the person of the Treasurer, since he had last met him in the Hall of Justice.

The unaccustomed and violent exercise, and the fearful anxiety he had since undergone, had reduced this fat, and portly person, in a manner that perfectly amazed the tailor, who well aware of his former dimensions, saw with con-

sternation, the ungainly folds in which the garments he had himself constructed, hung round his shapeless body. His face was sallow and lengthened, and the loosened skin fell in dark wrinkles beneath his hollow eyes and drooping cheeks. His countenance was sad, and gloomy, and spiritless, and his whole figure had an expression of restlessness and desolation, that was the very opposite of his former costly neatness, and smiling, fawning urbanity.

Staffer was a man on whom labour made no impression, and he looked the same as ever; healthy, powerful, and dull; only he was evidently in a very bad humour.

"Well, Michael Graaf," he said, in a very surly tone, "this is all your doing. I will never ask another man's advice again, as long as I live. Such modesty is confounded folly, in a man who has his wits about him, as I have. Did I not say all along, the Swiss would get the better, and cut the French all to mince meat; and yet like a fool I let you persuade me to join

these rascally French ! a parcel of skip-jacks, that know no more how to handle a rifle, than a bow and arrow, and now they will be all obliged to take to their heels, and I left to answer for their doings. It will be well if I don't find the headsman's axe on my neck before the week is at an end, and in the mean time what thanks have I got for my trouble. My farms are all over run, my rising crops trodden down as flat as a new-mown meadow, every ox, and cow I had, have I seen cut into steaks and broiled at a sticks end for these cowardly cormorants ; yet though you told me I should be justly paid for all my corn, and my cattle, not a stiver have I ever received, nevertheless I know well enough all the money for such matters passes through your own hands. I lent you large sums too, Michael, and though you still pretend you are my friend, I cannot get so much from you, as would buy me a slice of goat's cheese, and you have the impudence to tell me, that the change of government wipes

off all old debts. I won't believe it, Michael, that's flat ; and if you don't give me a thousand florins this very night, I will go over to Aloys Reding, with all my men, before sunrise."

"And much good that will do you," returned the Treasurer, who with evident impatience had listened to this long harangue ; "Aloys Reding has more soldiers under his banner already, than he can feed, and does not want your company, and I would advise you not to be too certain yet, that he is to have matters all his own way. The French may have had the worst of it to-day, but they would not be beaten if they had lost twenty such battles, and rely upon it, you will be one of the very first whom the Generals will pay for their cattle."

"Ay, Michael, but there are rumours abroad, that you had money given you to provide provisions for their army, but that it has never gone further than your own pocket."

"There is nothing my enemies will scruple to say, to my injury," returned Graaf, "and as

long as their tales did not reach the Generals' ears, I cared not a straw, but it is no use talking to me about florins, Staffer, for I am a ruined man,"

"Has any new misfortune happened to you?" said the farmer, opening his wide, blue eyes, with stupid wonder; "all I know is, you have ruined me, out and out, and it is quite right you should have your turn, as well as other people."

"The General and some others of these needy Frenchmen," pursued Michael, "were disappointed it seems, when they came to count the contents of the Treasury, and some good natured rascal must needs tell them the accusations so infamously brought against me, besides various other matters I need not explain. I soon found that notwithstanding all my services, I was regarded with suspicion, and I determined to depart to some less distracted country, where I might end my old age in peace, when yesterday, to my horror, I received intelligence that my house and all it

contained, had been seized by the governor's order. I waited on General Schauenberg for an explanation. He told me in round terms, all he had heard of the robbery, and the foolish reports in circulation about my contract for provisions; intimating, at the same time, the most insulting doubts of my good faith. I swore to my innocence; I told him the whole story of Walther Stanz, and when I found he paid little attention to my protestations, I offered as the best proof of my truth and honesty, to procure for him possession of the pass above Arth, without a gun being fired. This somewhat appeased him, and he promised if I kept my word, that my house and property should forthwith be restored to me, without question or further molestation."

"And a mighty good bargain you made no doubt," thought Hans, but in silent eagerness he awaited the conclusion of the Treasurer's narrative.

"Aware of what was going on, and anxious

to have a sure card at a pinch," he continued, "I had already opened a correspondence with a greedy fellow named Berens, who commanded the party at the pass, and had arranged every thing with him, but his price. I returned to finish our negotiations with all speed, but judge of my dismay, when I found him dead, and Walther Stanz, my ruin, my detestation, installed in his place; and as if to fill the measure of my injuries, there was Justine, my own niece, actually with him at midnight, sharing his watch."

"Justine, say you! I wish I had been within gun shot of the rascal!" exclaimed Staffer furiously.

"Ay, by the mass, I wish you had!" cried the Treasurer, "or that I had had the presence of mind, to send a bullet through his brain, but if you will only consent to help me, we will give him a dressing yet, or I am much mistaken. To be brief. The lying scoundrel agreed to all the terms I offered."

“ And the girl, what became of her ?”

“ I left her with him, by way of sealing the bargain,” replied Graaf, “ but the fellow had more wit than I gave him credit for. I told the French General that all was arranged, two thousand men were ordered to march through the pass, but no sooner were they fairly entangled in it, than this young villain, setting all faith at defiance, poured not only a fire of rifles, but of cannon on them from every side. The havoc was frightful, many hundreds fell, and all retreated. I have seen the General; his indignation knows no bounds; and I believe nothing but his consciousness, that I have powerful friends in Lucerne, whom it would be dangerous to alienate, prevents him having me at once shot as a traitor. This is not a pleasant position, Herr Staffer, and I begin to suspect it would have been wiser never to have brought these fellows into the country at all, for though they seem to keep a pretty exact inventory of every man’s goods,

to handle them at their own convenience, they have no ledger of his services, and mine are already forgotten. I told him my honest plans had been circumvented by the same fellow who robbed the treasury. He cursed him, and wished he was hung, a desire in which I cordially joined."

"But if he were hung this minute, that would not pay me a farthing of my money," said Staffer doggedly, "and moreover I should advise you to catch him first."

"Ah, my good fellow, you are right there, as you always are," returned Michael, "nobody has a sharper wit, and a stronger arm than Staffer, say I; or faith I would have kept all this story to myself. To catch the scoundrel, is, as you say, the first step in this business."

"And when he is caught how can you make sure he will be hanged, or beheaded either?" persisted Staffer sullenly, though greatly mollified by the flattery of the Treasurer.

"Perhaps he may be shot, which will come

to the same thing," returned Graaf, "but or the other, is certain, for if I have not convinced General Schauenberg that he is a rebel—a spy—and a rebel guilty of every crime under the sun, I can get plenty of witnesses to prove my accusations beyond dispute, and to attest, besides, that he has unbounded influence over the peasantry, whose rebellious spirit can never be quenched, till he is made an example of. In my assertions have already had such an effect that a reward is offered for his capture, and as what General Schauenberg said, I am persuaded he will give any sum to the man who brings Walther Stanz a prisoner; for, as he fears to vent his anger upon me, he would gladly be assured I am not the traitor this affair of the pass had led him to suspect."

"Would he give a thousand florins, Michael," inquired Staffer, "that would help to stock the farm again."

"Ay, so I thought," said Graaf, "and that is the very reason I named it to you, for I

ever mindful of a friend's interests. Now to speak plainly, I am too old to master Walther Stanz alone, and was unwilling to seek other assistance, till you refused to help me, for I should be glad for you to have the profit of the job."

"Well, Michael, that was well done of you," returned the farmer, "and if you would pay your just debts—"

"To be sure I will, my good fellow," said the Treasurer, "when I get my house and my money back again; but, you see, to do that, it is absolutely necessary to keep the French General in good humour; I would not take advantage of any changes in the law to cheat an old friend, for all the world, whatever I might say, when I was angry; and as soon as Walther is taken, and I can turn myself round, you shall have every livre I owe you, depend upon it. Moreover, my niece is with Walther Stanz, and if you can manage to take her pri-

soner likewise, you may marry her yet, if you please."

"Thank you—but I think we had better say no more about that, for the future," said the farmer stroking his bullet head, "but surely Michael, you talked of going on your travels in a day or two, and now you tell me to wait for my money, till you get your house back again—first you say this, and then you say that, till upon my life, there is no knowing what you mean."

"I mean all I say," said Michael gravely, "let us catch Walther, and then you will understand me plain enough."

"But if the French are driven out of the country?"

"No fear!" replied the wily old man, nodding his head, "and if by chance matters should go wrong with us, and I am obliged to seek safety in flight, I shall not go empty handed and shall be glad of your company."

"Nay, I am used to these hills," answered Staffer completely puzzled, "my own farm was one of the prettiest pieces of land in the whole canton—it had pasture, and meadow, and a slip of corn, and a cherry orchard, all under my eye, as one may say; I had three barrels of prime cider in my cellar."

"Ay, good strong stuff too," returned Michael.

"Yes truly; and here, though as I said before, I have taken up arms for the French, they have cooked all my cows, and drank every drop of my liquor. If that is the way they serve their friends, the lord have mercy on their enemies."

"So say I," answered the crafty old man; "and I am anxious that Walther Stanz should have a touch of their courtesy, for, after all, he is the first cause of all this mischief."

"Walther Stanz!" cried the farmer with stupid amazement,

"Yes, if he had never interfered between

you and Justine, you would have been married long ago, and neither you nor I would have troubled our heads about the French."

"He is an impudent upstart, who never had any more respect for his betters, than a cow has for Christmas!" cried Staffer, "and I have never forgotten that I owe him a sound drubbing for the death of my fine hound."

"Then you will help me to arrest him?" eagerly demanded Graaf, now trusting that he had worked him to the point he desired.

"With all my heart!" was the reply, "provided we can find him without poking our heads into the middle of the whole Swiss army. I could master half a dozen ill fed shepherds, I warrant me, but a whole regiment is more than I could manage."

"I know you can do wonders," said Graaf, "but still it might be as well to have assistance. Your own shepherds are not all killed, are they?"

"No, but four out of five have gone over to

the enemy; moreover Walther Stanz is a favourite with these fools; but there are some of the Frenchmen I could bribe."

"We shall not want more than a score," was Michael's reply, "for the fellow is posted with a detachment at the old mill on the Rossberg, at a distance from the main army."

"How know you this, Michael!" hastily demanded Staffer.

"I have been keeping a sharp look out after him, ever since the battle, and money will hire spies, even amongst the honest mountaineers," answered the Treasurer with a sneer. "But it must be near midnight, and the sooner this business is set agoing the better. Since I disappointed the soldiers at the pass, they will be more likely to follow you, than me, Staffer; so there are twenty florins to give them as a bait, and bring them hither with all despatch. Twenty men I think we had better say."

"Truly Michael, I have scarcely slept these two nights," replied the farmer.

"Then lie down and take an hour's rest. I will engage to awaken you before it is too late."

"Be in no hurry, the longer I sleep, the stronger I shall be for our work when I waken; so success to our expedition," and without waiting to hear further, Staffer drew his hat over his brows, and stretched himself at full length upon the grass.

Fool as he was, yet Michael envied him whilst he slept, for there was no repose for him. Suspected and despised, even by those he called his friends, he was surrounded by difficulties and dangers, and he by no means relied so sanguinely as he had pretended to Staffer, on the beneficial consequences, he had asserted, were likely to result from the capture of Walther Stanz, even should they succeed in making him a prisoner. Yet still he resolved to attempt it. Though not naturally a vindictive man, his heart was hardened by the disgrace and danger to which the acquittal of the young mountaineer

had recently subjected him ; he persuaded himself that his conduct with regard to Justine, alone justified his enmity, and the recent repulse at the pass, which had involved him in almost certain ruin, made him resolute to effect the destruction of a man, who by a strange succession of events, had blasted his reputation, both with friends and enemies, who had brought upon him the danger of an ignominious death, and who started up to his discomfiture, at every turning of his path, as if ordained by fate to be the minister of its vengeance.

But notwithstanding the resolution to which he had wrought himself, Michael Graaf felt a coward's terrors as the moment for its execution approached, and he was deeply and bitterly conscious, that no plan he could devise, would ever restore to him the good name he had forfeited by his crimes, or procure from the invaders, the respect and authority, he had once enjoyed in his native

city. Plunder he saw at length was the principal object of the French, and his riches were too well known for him to hope to escape spoliation. In fact, whatever revenge he might obtain, against Walther Stanz, he was a ruined man, ruined by his own intrigues, and he knew it, and the knowledge added rancour to every bitter feeling of his heart.

But amidst all these disturbed thoughts, the image of Father Paul perpetually flitted, and flashed across his brain, mingled with the remembrance of the golden curl, and the confession wrung from him in the cave, that Clarice had borne a child. His detestation of the Hermit was intense, yet he devised no plot against his life; he could gain nothing by his death, whilst, as long as he drew breath, there was still a chance that he might relent, and reveal to him the secret of his infant's fate. As he thought how completely he had been baffled, and circumvented by the priest in every dealing they had had together, tears, half of vexa-

tion, half of sorrow, filled his eyes, and once—but it was only for a moment, the remembrance of the days when they were both young together and his vices had not yet degenerated into crimes, came over his mind, and he felt that he would have given worlds to be as he was then.

But this glimpse of the past, though it redoubled his agony, did not divert him from the course he had chosen for the future, nor soften his feelings towards Walther Stanz; however he might repent of other deeds, he thought there was no sin in seeking vengeance against one who had so deeply injured him, and whose death appeared absolutely necessary for his own safety. He failed not therefore in due course of time to arouse Staffer from his sleep, and claim the performance of his promises.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ I can keep modest counsel, ride, run, hear a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly : that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in ; and the best of me is diligence——

SHAKESPEARE. LEAR.

THOUGH Hans Brunk listened with the deepest interest to the conversation between Staffer and Michael Graaf, even his curiosity could not make him entirely insensible to the danger and discomforts of his position. He scarcely dared to stir a limb, yet he felt himself every moment sinking deeper in the wet and spongy soil, and whilst a glowing fire was burning within a dozen

yards of him, the poor little man lay amongst the rushes, with his chin just raised above the bog, till his very heart felt congealed by the cold.

Still he had the patience to listen to the end, but no sooner was the farmer fast asleep, and the Treasurer's back towards him, than with one desperate effort he extricated himself from the swamp and glided away amongst the brushwood, as quickly as his half benumbed limbs permitted him. He well knew Michael Graaf was no shot with a rifle, even had the noise of his flight disturbed him, and starting on his feet the moment he was beyond the copse, he began to run with all the speed he could from the precincts of the French camp.

Much did the tailor exult in the confession he had heard from the Treasurer, of the desperate state of his fortunes, and he fully resolved that the last stroke should not be wanting on his part, to put a finish to his ruin.

To accomplish this, he debated for a moment, whether it would be better to apprise

Waltner stanz at once of his danger, or see the near quarters of the Swiss, a sufficient force to arrest Michael Graaf in the very pursuit of his iniquitous purpose. He shrank somewhat from showing himself at the camp, but he trusted he should be able to get away again without being enlisted either to mend soldiers' jackets, or carry a gun into battle; after a moment's consideration, convinced the latter was the better course, his love for money overcame his dislike to appearing in front of his quarters, and he resolved at once to inform either Father Paul, or Albrecht of the fact he had detected.

There was a pleasure in this resolution, which partly atoned for a circumstance which he could not avoid, for while he was attending his usual routine, he was in constant jeopardy of being detected.

The night was very dark, and the wind that blew up the valley, made such a rustling sound in the grass around him, that he

not hear the sound of approaching footsteps, on the soft green turf, till on suddenly turning the corner of an old stone wall, he stood in face of half a dozen French soldiers, whose watch being relieved, were returning to their quarters for the night.

To his consternation they immediately stopped him, and such was his surprise and dismay, that all his effrontery forsook him, at the moment he had most need of it. It was in vain he said he was a friend; he had forgotten the pass word, and his protestations won no belief.

The sergeant of the watch said, they had many such friends, who understanding their language, hovered round the army, to pick up all the news they could hear, for the benefit of the enemy, and after what had happened the day before, it was high time that some of these spies should be made an example of. The poor tailor was accordingly taken into custody, and comforted by the assurance, that unless he

could give some clearer account of himself next morning, he would most infallibly be shot.

Of this Hans had small apprehension, he relied too much on his own ingenuity, to believe he should remain so long in the Frenchmen's custody, and only waited to see his prison, before he taxed his invention for a plan of escape; but the fatal consequences to be apprehended from the unavoidable loss of time, drove him nearly to distraction.

It was now utterly impossible, that even, should he effect his escape, he could obtain any timely assistance for Walther, from the Swiss camp. If he were delayed only one hour, he could scarcely hope to reach the mill before the Treasurer, and with a very desponding heart, the little man was led along, with his arms tied behind his back, between two tall grenadiers, for nearly a quarter of a mile, exactly in an opposite direction, from that he wished to follow.

But as they stumbled on over hedge and ditch, he wisely reflected, that his gloom would profit him nothing, and well aware that he was a very amusing little fellow, when he exerted his abilities, and that it might prove of material advantage to him to promote the good humour of his guards, he gradually began to mingle an occasional joke, or repartee with the discourse they were carrying on around him.

In victory, or defeat, in idleness, or labour, the French are equally gay and good-humoured, except when the spirit of fighting is aroused within them, either by politics, or brandy; and in the present instance, Hans had no such demon to contend with. It had spent its force in the previous battle, and the soldiers, tired of more serious matters, were quite ready to enjoy by way of variety, the quaint humour of their prisoner.

As soon as Hans found his wit raised a laugh amongst his auditors, he ventured by degrees

to take a larger share of the discourse; but it was never to complain in the smallest degree of his own treatment; he seemed to forget he was a prisoner, and adapting himself most admirably to his company, they were so well pleased with him, that before they reached the cowshed where they were to spend the remainder of the night, they treated him more as an old boon companion, than a suspected enemy.

But though under other circumstances, this might have been very agreeable, at that moment, Hans was unwilling that it should be protracted much longer, yet even after his captors had lighted a fire with the doors and window shutters, and the relics of the milk vessels that lay scattered around the shed, he saw but little chance of any change for the better.

The Frenchmen had but a scanty supply of food, and instead of being bewildered, or put to sleep by the brandy they copiously swallowed, they seemed determined to do nothing but

talk. Each man recounted with many marvellous additions, his own exploits during the past day; but though they were mightily pleased by the credulous wonder, with which their prisoner affected to believe every lie they uttered, and rewarded him by a bountiful supply of their liquor, they never offered to untie his hands, nor said a word about giving him his liberty.

Hans in his turn, told ludicrous stories, and sung comical songs, but equally in vain, till at length he nearly lost patience. He had always hated Frenchmen, and now when instead of clambering the mountain in pursuit of his heart's desire, he was compelled to sit there, playing the fool for the amusement of his enemies, he heartily wished them all at the bottom of the red sea.

Yet still he relaxed nothing of his politeness. There are as subtle men in a cottage, as a court, though they may work with rougher tools.

At length when the good humour of the

party seemed to have reached its height, he ventured to hint that he should find himself more at ease if the cords round his wrists were somewhat relaxed. A keen glance from the sergeant warned him in an instant that he had gone too far, but when the indulgence was cavalierly denied, he made no observation.

“Ay, ay, it is your game now,” he thought, “but either Walther, or I, shall mark you yet from behind a bush with a bullet, my fine fellow,” but he only laughed, and continued the story he had previously been telling. Yet every now and then, his face lengthened in spite of his utmost exertions, and some of his most comical sentences concluded with a very dismal cadence, for time was flying rapidly, and he felt he was no nearer the recovery of his liberty, than at the first moment of his detention. At length he began to consider, that it might be more expedient to hold his tongue, than to keep his enemies awake by the facetiousness that had failed to mollify them, and accordingly he

gradually relapsed into silence, and leaning back in a dark corner, between the fire and the window, pretended to slumber. The example appeared contagious, for no sooner had the tailor begun to snore, than one after another the wearied soldiers quickly dropped asleep, and there was soon a deep silence in the hovel.

Half an hour elapsed, and Hans ventured to look up; he hoped that the moment for escape had arrived; but there sat the provoking sergeant, at the opposite side of the fire, as wide awake as ever, evidently watching him. Presently, as if determined not to sleep, the man began to clean his gun, whilst his cartridge box, newly replenished, stood open close beside him.

It was a great relief to Hans when he saw him thus occupied, and felt that his keen eyes were no longer upon him; ever since he had been in the dark, he had been fumbling with the cord behind his back, till he had actually loosened one of the knots, and he could now

proceed with his work, with less fear of detection. To many, it might have appeared needless to get his hands at liberty, when the watchfulness of his guard seemed to render it impossible for him to make use of his feet; but Hans had a scheme in his head, and knew very well what he was about.

The nature of his usual occupation made his hands very supple, and he was master of all the mysteries of knots; to tie them was part of his trade, and his skill in that art made him fortunately most adroit in dissecting those, by which he was confined, when he had once succeeded in getting them within reach of his finger's ends.

Ever and anon the sergeant looked towards him, and then he stopped, and snored with infinite regularity; but no sooner did the soldier resume his work, than Hans was busy likewise, and apparently much the most nimbly of the two, for long before the Frenchman had half

cleaned his musket, the loosened cords fell from the hands of his prisoner.

The exultation of the little man had no bounds; he was in a perfect ecstasy with his own skill. There remained however much to be done, and before Hans well knew how to proceed, his further movements were arrested for a time, by the entrance of a stranger into the hovel.

He was apparently a superior officer, and immediately on his arrival, he commenced an earnest and rapid conversation with the sergeant, but in so low a voice, that only a few words of their discourse reached the ears of the tailor.

They were evidently afraid that he only pretended sleep, and might perchance over-hear them, for after a short time, they both moved towards the door. Hans saw that whilst their backs were towards him, not a moment was to be lost.

“Now, or never he thought,” and springing

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groans, and angry exclamations of their own men, and when the atmosphere became somewhat clearer, though several of the soldiers lay bleeding and wounded, there was no appearance of an enemy.

Hans would have been delighted had he heard the amazement and wild conjectures his exploit occasioned; until the discovery of the brand still blazing in the middle of the floor, accounted rationally for the explosion, and when, in addition to that, it was found that the facetious prisoner had disappeared, no doubt remained that he had been the author of the mischief. To pursue him under the darkness of night, would have been utterly useless, for it was evident that he must have considerably the start of his enemies, and those who had not suffered by his expedient, could not help laughing heartily at the ingenuity with which he had effected his escape.

Accustomed to snatch their rest amidst the accidents and vicissitudes of war, the French

soldiers ere long resumed their sleep, and Hans without further interruption pursued his way up the Rossberg, towards the deserted mill.

Anxiously did he endeavour to discover by the stars, how long his captors had detained him, but the result was not encouraging, and fearful lest the time when his warning might prove of any service had already passed by, the little man toiled up the mountain with deeper feelings of anxiety than he had ever before experienced, except on the day of the trial of Walther Stanz ; but still the conviction of his own importance, and the immense value of the tidings he conveyed, greatly allayed his trouble on his nephew's account, and his spirits rose wonderfully as he approached the mill.

CHAPTER IX.

"Call not the years thine own that made thee grey,
That left their wrinkles, and have fled away ;
The past no more shall yield thee ill or good,
Gone to the silent times before the flood.
Dark are our fates ; to-morrow's sun may peer,
From the flush'd east upon our funeral bier."

PALLADAS.

WHILST their friends and enemies were thus busy in the valley below, Walther Stanz and his companions unconscious of any impending evil had reached their appointed place of rest.

It was an extensive and irregular wooden building, fitted like a nest into the uneven face of the rock. One half of it had been the miller's dwelling, the other his mill, and jointly

they presented a strange, fantastic combination of wooden wheels, and galleries, and sloping roofs, to defend the whole from the winter's snows. But the mountain stream that had once been conducted by wooden spouts to set the rustic machinery in motion, now poured its unimpeded waters over the neighbouring rocks, and the busy hum of industry had ceased to enliven the deserted building. Forsaken by its inhabitants, it had alternately been in the possession of the invaders, and the invaded, during the fluctuating events of the preceding days, and having only been evacuated by the French a few hours before the mountaineers ascended thither, they found it utterly destitute of furniture.

Fortunately the soldiers soon discovered a store of wood in one of the outhouses, and a brief time elapsed ere a huge fire threw its cheering glow around the walls of the kitchen. The mountain air was clear and cold at that early season, and both men and women thronged gladly around

the hearth, to share a portion of the food with which Hans had provided them. There is no enjoyment so keen as that which has been purchased by deprivation and labour, and words of pleasure passed from lip to lip, during that simple repast, such as frequently fail to enliven the costly feasts of idle luxury.

Justine alone said little, but she sat close to Walther, and she was happy. An hour had thus passed away, when Lena perceiving that one of the soldiers slept, insisted that all should seek repose. Overcome by fatigue and long watching, and fearless of danger or surprise, none dissented from her proposition.

The house having no communication with the mill, consisted, like most Swiss cottages, of two stories, overhung by the wide eaves of a slanting wooden roof, but not surrounded, as usual, midway from the ground, by a wooden gallery, the only passage from the lower to the upper floor being through a trap door, by means of a moveable ladder.

Much of the building leaned against the side of the mountain, so that the solid rock, somewhat roughly chiselled, served as the back wall of the kitchen, and a door opened from the room, or rather lofts above, on to a narrow staircase hewn out of the almost perpendicular cliff that rose behind it. These steps led to a little terrace far above, at the further end of which a single pine was cast as a bridge over the deep abyss, down which the mountain torrent dashed, which once subdued by man, had formerly dropped with placid regularity onto the wheels of the mill. The path then led onwards amongst the rocks beyond it, and here and there a solitary pine finding a root amongst their crevices, increased the gloomy grandeur of the scene.

It was by this wild pass that the inhabitants of the upper mountains had been accustomed to bring their corn to the mill, and inaccessible as it appeared, it was joined a little further on, by another road, which winding from the front

of the building, crossed the torrent at a lower point, by a less perilous bridge.

The upper lofts of the cottage had been used by its former occupants, as a store-house for the hay they collected with infinite labour amongst the rocks, for the supply of their cattle during winter; and when Lena ascended through the trap door, she found that much of this provender still remained in the back part of the building.

She conjectured that a little square chamber in front, divided off by rugged boards, had been the sleeping apartment of the women, and here, having spread a couch of sweet dry hay, she proposed that Justine and herself should pass the night, whilst the men were to watch and sleep alternately, in the kitchen.

The maiden quickly lay down, and exhausted by fatigue, had sunk into a profound sleep when the Shepherdess on passing through the loft, on her way below, was startled by the sound of heavy groans. They seemed to come

from a recess, behind a yet unbroken pile of hay, but she had no light, and the glimmer from the distant window did not penetrate so far. In vain she repeatedly demanded if any one was there; she received no answer, nor were the sounds repeated; and somewhat alarmed, she thought it best to proceed in search of Walther, or some of the other men, before she investigated the mystery.

With hurried steps she descended the ladder, and her report occasioned no small surprise, till it was suggested by one of the soldiers, that the mill having been so recently and hastily evacuated by the French, it was not improbable, that one of their wounded comrades might have been forgotten and deserted, in the confusion of their flight.

Both Lena and Walther thought it likely that such might be the fact, but as in these times ordinary prudence made it absolutely necessary to ascertain exactly who was under the same roof with them, before they lay down

to repose, they determined to investigate the matter without further delay.

Candle they had none, but Walther selected one of the most resinous branches from the fire, and taking his rifle in the other hand, led the way to the loft.

It was evidently dangerous to venture amidst the dry hay with such a flaring torch, but there was no substitute to be had, and followed by his mother, and one of the soldiers, he rapidly mounted the ladder.

They had no sooner reached the upper story, than the groans were again audible; they were those of a man in extreme agony, and with more compassion than dread, the little party advanced to the recess from whence they appeared to proceed.

Careful that no blazing sparks should fall, Walther stretched his torch within it, and by the glaring and fitful light, a man in the French uniform was distinctly visible, lying on a pile of straw near the wall. His pale and distorted

face was towards them, and the eager gaze of his fixed, glassy eye, convinced them he was dying.

Yet consciousness had not forsaken him, and no sooner did he perceive them approaching than, in a faint voice, he asked for water, not in French, but in their own language.

The Shepherdess in an instant flew to comply with his request, whilst the young man fastening his torch in the wall, inquired of the sufferer, if they could otherwise assist him?

“No, no,” he replied, “I am past all help; wounded in yesterday’s battle, my comrades have forsaken me; but I deserved no mercy from heaven, and shall find none,” he added in a deep, hollow voice, and clasping his hands with a look of unutterable despair, he sunk back on his rude bed.

There he lay apparently insensible, till Lena having returned with a wooden bowl of water and held it to his lips, he again looked up, with wonder and curiosity, at those around him.

"A woman!" he murmured, "and one who will close my dying eyes with kindness! heaven hears even the prayer of a sinner. I heeded neither bayonet, nor bullet, but when I heard them all depart, when the guns sounded afar off, and I lay bound by the chains of death, in this dark, dreary solitude, my senses wandered; I saw her as plainly as I now see you, and there was anger on her brow—and threatening. A priest! I pray you let me see a priest before I die."

"There are none here, but soldiers, and women," replied Walther Stanz, "but I will send to head quarters and there is one I know there, who if he can, will come with all despatch."

"I shall die long ere he arrives!" was the sad reply of the soldier, and Lena having examined his wound and felt his pulse, shook her head, and said that it would be little use sending to Father Paul, as he could not be there in less than three hours.

"Father Paul," said you, "not Paul Styger

—not for the world,” muttered the soldier, with a look of horror; “if I made my confession to him, he would curse rather than absolve me.”

“Do you know him, then?” demanded Walther, with no small amazement.

“Ay, and he has known me for years,” rejoined the stranger, who, revived by a recital that Lena had made him swallow, now sat up with hectic cheek, and flashing eye. “He knew me at Milan, when I wore the Friar’s frock, and he trusted me, when I was little worthy of trust.”

“A Priest say you! and now a soldier?”

“Ay, Sir; these are the sins that wars and revolutions drive men to. I have broken my faith to God, as well as to man, and now behold my punishment—here—and hereafter. No Priest—no pardon,” and with a countenance fearfully distorted, he again sunk back in convulsions.

Walther, little accustomed to the sight of death, watched the sad spectacle with silent

awe; but Lena, more experienced, knelt down by the side of the wretched man, and used every means in her power to alleviate his sufferings. Ere long he began to mutter broken words, and disjointed sentences, partly in German, partly in Italian, sometimes as if addressing a woman, and talking to her about a child; at others deprecating in imploring accents the wrath of Father Paul; and once, both Walther and Lena felt assured, he uttered the name of Michael Graaf.

Their curiosity was powerfully excited, especially that of the Shepherdess, who, from a knowledge of certain circumstances unknown to her son, took a most intense interest in the confessions of the dying soldier. Combining the purport of his incoherent disclosures, with events in which many years before she had borne a share, a secret—marvellous—unexpected—and of vital importance to those most dear to her, appeared to hover half revealed before her senses. With feelings of extraordinary

anxiety, she endeavoured to revive the sufferer, and to restore his wandering senses, if only for a brief interval, that before his spirit departed she might learn the truth, or fallacy of her surmises, from one, who had himself, she felt convinced, been an actor in a mysterious transaction she had long vainly sought to comprehend.

Owing to her recent attendance on the wounded at the camp, she was provided with several medicinal restoratives, which she administered in the present instance with better success than she anticipated, for under her skilful management, the soldier's convulsions gradually subsided, and though they left him much weaker than before, his senses no longer wandered.

When Lena had again administered to him a reviving draft, she ventured to inquire if he had not spoken of one Michael Graaf? The soldier started at the name, and turned on her his large, bright eyes, with a look of amazement.

She repeated her question.

“ Yes,” he then replied ; “ more than twenty years ago, I knew him well ; yet not well enough, for he was a specious hypocrite, and I thought him honest. Though in an Italian monastery, I was a Swiss by birth, and gladly sought the converse of my countrymen. I will tell you all, if I can, for though there is no priest here to give me absolution, I shall die more easily, when my heart is unburthened of its secret sins.”

“ Heaven will doubtless accept your repentance,” said Lena, “ and your disclosures may perchance yet benefit the living.”

The man shook his head, and thus proceeded.

“ Even under the frock of the priesthood, there was little religion amongst the young disciples of the church in those days. The opinions, which afterwards prevailed in France, were striving invisibly amongst us, and Michael Graaf and I loved to discourse on these forbidden matters. I hated my profession and

longed to escape from its trammels ; I fancied myself a philosopher, and was any thing but a Catholic ; he knew it, and had me in his power.

“ I was acquainted with Paul Styger likewise ; he was not a priest then, and was of too noble and ingenuous a spirit, to suspect my follies, or the bonds of evil which united me to Michael Graaf. These men, by an unlucky chance, ere long became attached to the same girl. I soon detected the passion of Styger, though he told me nothing ; Michael made me his confidant, pretending the most fervent love, though I now believe he cared for nothing but the maiden's gold. I did not then doubt the truth of his professions, for I had seen the young Clarice, and knew that she was like an incarnation of the beautiful and perfect forms with which our painters seek to delude young sinners to devotion. But I will be brief. Do you know this Graaf ? ”

“ Ay, to my cost,” returned Walther, who with breathless attention listened to these

strange disclosures, though unlike Lena, without any suspicion of the secret transaction to which they related. "He is a vile traitor," he added, "who has betrayed his country for gold, and now bears arms in the ranks of her invaders."

"I heard of him, but was thankful we never met," rejoined the stranger in a faint voice.

"He is the only enemy I have on earth," said Walther sternly.

"Your enemy, young man!" returned the soldier, who during this brief dialogue, had not ceased to survey Walther Stanz, with a wondering and inquisitive eye, as if he sought to recall some long past remembrance to his mind; "does he bear you no relationship?"

"What, Michael Graaf! no heaven be thanked, my kindred are all honest!" exclaimed the youth impetuously.

"Yet there is a strange likeness," murmured the soldier, still fixedly regarding him.

"Not to the Treasurer surely?" was Walter's eager rejoinder.

"No—no—not to him," answered the man sulkily, "to me far fairer—far better—but I forgot myself. I said I would tell all."

The stranger then for a few moments hid his face with his hands, as if to collect his strength and his faculties, for the conclusion of his narrative; and there was a deep silence in the loft, broken only by the sighing of the night wind through the crevices in its wooden roof, and the crackling of the pine branch that flared against the wall.

Ever long the dying man resumed his narrative.

"I married Michael Grauf to Clarice Reding," he said. "To her the marriage benediction was a curse. If the man ever loved, his passion was soon spent, and following the example of many Italian husbands, he encouraged others by his neglect to pursue her." She had

numerous admirers, but though heart broken, she spurned them all, for she was honest, as she was fair. But there was one not to be put off by her disdain. He was a wealthy merchant named Vergani, and Paul Styger was in his office. He knew me well—too well—and bribed me to his interests. I sounded Michael Graaf—great heaven forgive me—and found that he too could be bought. The bargain was soon made, and Clarice condemned to be a sacrifice to her husband's avarice. I had little compunction at first, for the part I had acted, for Italian women are not difficult in these matters; but when I saw the grief, the madness of the broken hearted victim, I was horrified at my share in this transaction, I appealed to Michael Graaf, but in vain; I sought Paul Styger; I told him the whole story. I shall never forget his indignation, but he knew better how to act than I did, and rescued Clarice, ere she crossed Vergani's threshold, from the degradation and infamy her betrayers

had prepared for her. He placed her in seclusion, and there, at the end of half a year, she became a mother. When I was called upon to baptize the child, both Father Paul and the poor Clarice exacted from me a promise, nay a most solemn oath, that during her life time, I would never disclose to Michael Graaf that he was a father. She justly feared that her child would be torn from her, and that her guilty husband would instil his own iniquitous principles into the heart of her offspring. The sight of the love that young deserted creature lavished upon her infant, would have moved the most stubborn heart, and mine, though perverted, was not hardened in iniquity. I gave the oath, and I have kept it faithfully. Styger soon after left the city with the young mother and her child, and I heard no more of them, till some years ago, when Paul once more came to Milan; he told me in confidence, that poor Clarice was dead, yet as he requested me still to maintain the same silence as I had hitherto done, when

her brother Aloys Reding afterwards questioned me concerning her fate, I did not disclose the fact, I only hinted its possibility. When the French invasion set the monks at liberty, I quickly left my monastery, and took up arms, vainly believing that man could absolve me from a contract made with heaven. Since the army came hither, I have heard that Michael Graaf is a wealthy, but childless man. Father Paul knows better; but if his offspring yet survives, the testimony of Father Paul, as to its birth, may want confirmation, and the last act of justice I can do, to her whom I have so deeply injured, is to confirm beyond dispute the right of her child to his father's rich inheritance.

"The child does live," murmured Lena in the ear of the dying man. "Why did you not let me send for Father Paul? I would have gone myself to the camp, had I known your confession was of such an important nature. But your pulse is firmer; your wounds have

ceased to bleed—there may be yet time to bring him hither !”

“ He knows all I can tell,” murmured the soldier in a feeble voice ; “ but I was wrong to fear that he would curse me ; he said long ago that he forgave me, and though severe, yet he is merciful.”

“ All his enmity to you, must long have ceased,” returned the shepherdess, “ for he is a man of high and holy mind, who looks on mortal weakness with indulgence. He will give you absolution, I doubt not, if you sincerely repent.”

“ Bitterly and deeply have I repented,” rejoined the sufferer, “ not only here upon my death bed, but long ago in the midst of victory, and plunder, and feasting. Such pastimes gave me no pleasure, when I knew how they were purchased, and amidst the horrors of war, I learned to hate the wild and lawless life, I had endangered my soul to share in.”

“ Then as the surest messenger I will go my-

self, to Father Paul ! and I will stake my life, that he returns with me."

" Yet, you will not leave me here alone," eagerly demanded the dying man.

" No—no—Walther shall remain with you," answered Lena.

" Walther !" echoed the soldier, again fixing his enquiring and searching eyes upon the mountaineer.

" Yes," she rejoined, " there will be no fighting to-night, and he can sleep as well here, as below, and he will be ready to give you any assistance you may require."

" Thanks," returned the wounded man, in very feeble accents, " I shall not long need his kindness, and if I should not live to see Father Paul," he continued, fumbling in his bosom as he spoke, until at length he drew forth a bundle of papers, much soiled and worn, and held it towards the shepherdess, " give these to Aloys Reding. They are the registers of poor Cla-

rice's marriage, and her child's baptism. Father Paul may have other copies, but Aloys Reding is high in authority, and when this war is ended, his influence will suffice to procure justice for his poor sister's son."

"Had we not better wait for the Hermit," inquired Lena.

"No," murmured the soldier—"My bond of secrecy has expired—his I suspect is still in force. Seek Aloys Reding—I could say much more, I could give you reasons—but I am cold, very cold. Begone, I implore you, and may the blessings of a dying man, reward your kindness."

Lena took the papers, and hastily assured him that his wishes should be strictly fulfilled. She then gave Walther a few hasty directions, as to the treatment of the wounded soldier, and commending poor Fritz likewise to his care, she glided with a rapid and noiseless step from the loft.

She found all below as she had previously left it, and warning the man who there kept watch, to be on his guard against surprise, the intrepid woman again went abroad, alone and in darkness, to traverse on her mission of mercy, the troubled precincts of two contending armies.

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be addressed. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

2. Next, it is important to gather relevant information and data. This can be done through research, consultation with experts, or by analyzing existing resources.

3. Once the information is gathered, the next step is to develop a plan or strategy. This involves breaking down the problem into smaller, manageable parts and determining the best approach to solve each part.

4. The fourth step is to implement the plan. This involves putting the strategy into action and monitoring progress along the way.

5. Finally, it is important to evaluate the results and make adjustments as needed. This involves comparing the actual outcomes with the expected results and identifying any areas for improvement.

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much danger of many leaving their quarters during the night; moreover her mind was so engrossed by the strange narrative she had just heard, and the extraordinary conjectures to which it gave rise, that she thought little of herself. There was much in the soldier's story, that for the sake of others, she had rejoiced to hear, and she deeply felt the importance of the trust confided to her.

"Heaven has its own ways, and its own times," she thought, as she speeded down the mountain; "who could have thought, that the trials of this dreadful war, would bring such strange things, as I have this night heard, to light, or that when we were sent to that deserted mill, we should, of all men, find him there, who had such secrets in his keeping. Little did Michael Graaf know how he has been toiling for his own punishment, or I suspect, till now, the whole extent of his guilt. But at length all things are plain; Aloys Reding will see that Justice is done to the innocent!"

The wind was blowing fitfully on the mountains, sometimes bearing the clouds in heavy masses around her, at others drifting the driving rain in large drops full in her face ; but accustomed to bear all the vicissitudes of the changing climate of those elevated regions, she heeded neither mist, nor shower, and had already trodden nearly half the way, with uninterrupted speed, when as she was descending the narrow, rocky bed of a dry torrent, she distinctly heard the steps of some one ascending the same rugged path.

She paused to listen, and then one of her native airs, whistled clear and shrill, sounded nearer and nearer every instant. She knew it well, and had she been disposed to fear, it would have dispelled her terrors, for it was the favorite strain with which her brother Hans habitually beguiled his labours, and though greatly puzzled to know what he could possibly be doing there at that untimely hour, she knew his peculiar cadences, and graces, too well, to

doubt for an instant, that he was the nocturnal musician.

She did not hesitate, therefore, to address him, and the wild cry of amazement with which he replied, at once proved she was not mistaken.

"Lena," he said, in hurried accents, "whither go you? has any mischief happened, that you are here alone?"

"Strange things have occurred, but no mischief that I am aware of," was her reply.

"Has no attack been made on the mill where you went with Walther?"

"Surely Hans that is a simple question; you must know as well as I, that for six hours at least, there is little chance of any more fighting. Both our friends and enemies are worn out for want of rest. Soldiers are but men, and they must sleep sometimes like other people."

"True, Lena, true," rejoined the tailor, with unwonted gravity, "but there are some evil

hearts that seem always awake; Michael Grauf's is one of these."

"Michael Grauf, what of him?" cried the shepherdess. "It seems as if his name was mixed up with every matter."

"Like enough," was the reply, "he has to do with most mischief. A coat can no more be cut out without sheers, than a plot hatched without the cunning Treasurer. But he has not been to the mill you say; so I may prove a match for him yet," and the little man rubbed his hands with infinite glee and satisfaction.

"Hans, for mercy's sake speak plainly," said the woman, "what reason had you to suspect he would go thither?"

"Reason enough," returned her brother. "I overheard him and Staffer lay the whole plot. He vows vengeance against Walther; he is to be taken prisoner and shot by the French as a spy, or a traitor, or something of that sort; and the old scoundrel is to come out

with a clean character, and keep all his money to himself. But they have not been, you say?"

"I left the cottage only a quarter of an hour ago, and all was quiet then; but know you not when they propose to put their scheme in execution?"

"This very hour, this very minute, for any thing I know to the contrary. It is some time since I overheard their arrangement of the whole plan, and I started off immediately, to seek assistance from Father Paul, or the General, but I was unluckily made prisoner by the way, and have just now almost miraculously escaped. I feared it was too late to go to head quarters, so I was hastening to the mill to put you and Walther upon your guard. But if you have all left it, there can be no further danger."

"Who said we had all left it?" cried Lena impetuously. "No, Hans, you are mistaken. Walther and Justine are still there, with poor

times multiplied, and notwithstanding the velocity of her movements, her anxiety was such, that like one struggling in a troubled sleep, a weight seemed to hang around her limbs.

Wonder, curiosity, and terror for the fate of all she loved, by turns occupied her mind; but the excitement of her highly wrought feelings, gave her strength to proceed onwards, and to hope almost against conviction.

Hans was far out of hearing, the rainy clouds were for a few moments borne apart, and the crescent moon threw its pale and sickly rays upon her path, when on the very verge of the valley, whilst gliding amongst a confused assemblage of those giant masses, which some former convulsion of nature, had rent from the ruined mountains, she again heard the tread of feet; but this time they were numerous, and loud voices mingled with the sounds, in careless and rude discourse.

Though not naturally timid, she deemed it only prudent to withdraw from the path, and

ress, and he showed us, at the pass yesterday, that he was a keen hand at keeping an enemy at bay ; and then, when the firing is heard, if succour should be sent him—we should cut a pretty figure after all, up in that nook with Father Paul, and half the Swiss rebels at his back, marking us out with their rifles.”

“ Never fear,” replied Graaf, whose desperate thirst for vengeance seemed to have endowed him with unwonted courage, “ the place is too far from their head quarters, for our guns to give any alarm there, and it will be our own fault, if we let any rat creep out of the hole, to convey the news thither, before we have secured our prisoner.”

“ But I tell you again, though I don’t care for an open charge with the bayonet, and that sort of fair, open day-light work, neither I, nor my men, have any fancy for standing in the dark to be shot at, out of garret windows, so if we can take the fellow at once by storm, well and good, but if not, good bye to you, and you



1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

2. Once the problem is identified, the next step is to define the objectives and goals of the project. This helps to clarify what needs to be achieved and provides a clear direction for the work.

3. The third step is to develop a plan or strategy to address the problem. This involves breaking down the problem into smaller, manageable tasks and determining the resources needed to complete them.

4. The fourth step is to implement the plan. This involves putting the strategy into action and monitoring progress to ensure that the objectives are being met.

5. Finally, the fifth step is to evaluate the results of the project. This involves assessing the outcomes against the objectives and identifying any areas for improvement or further action.

upon the pebbly ground, gradually becoming fainter and fainter.

For some moments she continued to stand, like a bewildered creature, stunned and stupified by all she had heard. Then the necessity for action burst suddenly on her mind. She had been so engrossed by the conversation of the leaders, that she had forgotten to count the numbers of the men, but on reflection she thought there might be about eighteen, or twenty. Notwithstanding the last awful proposition of Michael Graaf, still she derived hope from the conviction that the cottage was strongly secured, and its defenders warned by Hans against surprise, whilst the presence of Justine, she trusted, might divert the Treasurer from any attempt to burn out its inhabitants, and protract the siege till the succour she sought from the camp could return to their rescue. It was one of those desperate hopes which in moments of tranquillity no human being could confide in, but which in extreme danger, fre-



burned in front of it, would have sufficed to direct her to the cottage, where his temporary abode was fixed, and thither with straight forward speed, she directed her steps.

It was a wild and agonizing moment, as she approached that dwelling; she felt that the lives of Walther, Justine, and Fritz, and the future happiness, or lonely desolation of her own hearth, depended on the reception her demands might meet with there; on Father Paul she knew she could rely, but he might not be in the camp, and for a moment she thought with despair, that she and all belonging to her, were nothing to Aloys Reding; but the remembrance of the precious documents she had received from the dying soldier, at once dispelled these terrors, for she felt that these alone, in lack of every other advocate, would suffice to procure from the General, every aid it was in his power to accord her.

She reached his cottage—the guards knew her well, and aware of her relationship to Wal-

ther Stanz, and her acquaintance with the Hermit, were neither astonished by her request to speak with Aloys Reding, at that untimely hour, nor unwilling to obtain her admission. But every one expressed consternation at her agitated countenance and manner, and eagerly inquired if any new misfortune had happened.

She briefly told them, that all was quiet in the enemy's camp, for she was too troubled to say more, and then stood in silence, impatiently beating the ground with her foot, and eagerly watching for the reappearance of the man, who had gone into the hovel to announce her request.

More than five minutes, which to Lena seemed doubled by the agony of her suspense, elapsed before she again beheld him on the threshold; but her quick eye perceived at once, that his countenance was propitious, and he had scarcely waved his hand as a sign for her to follow him, ere she rushed forward into the passage where he stood. In another moment

she was in the presence of Aloys Reding himself.

A single candle burnt in the rude chamber where this indefatigable patriot had, for the first time during many nights, lain down to sleep upon a bed. But though the soldier, who went to announce Lena's request, had found him in a profound sleep, his orders were so positive to be awakened, should his assistance in any way be required, that the man did not hesitate to arouse him, and the account he gave of the woman's agitation, and the General's knowledge of her character, at once induced him to spring up, and hastily dressing himself, to give orders for her admission.

The fine, manly figure of Aloys Reding, bore evident traces of fatigue; the furrows on his brow were deepened, and his countenance much worn and harassed, when the shepherdess entered, and beheld him sitting on the only chair the place afforded, leaning his elbow on a small deal table at his side; the candle

threw a strong light upon his face, and she gazed at it for a moment with deep anxiety, ere she ventured to disclose the purpose of her visit.

"I presume, my good woman," he said during this pause, "that the tidings are important which bring you here at such an hour. Have the French made any new movement?"

"Though I come on a matter of life, and death, Aloys Reding," she returned, with wild abruptness, "it concerns not the public welfare, but your own interests."

"They are indissolubly united," was the brief reply.

"No, no, not in this instance, I fear," cried Lena, "and yet I come here to seek your immediate assistance with men and arms, or precious lives will be sacrificed before dawn."

"Has any new attack been made?"

"Michael Graaf is on foot again," she rejoined in hurried and breathless accents. "He has sworn to be revenged on Walther Stanz,

for his valiant defence of the pass ; and even as I came hither, I saw him with a strong party go to attack the mill, where he is stationed for the night. Walther had but six soldiers with him, the Treasurer has probably nearly twenty."

"Stanz is a gallant fellow, and must be rescued, if it be not yet too late," replied the General ; "five and twenty men shall immediately be put under arms to escort you back to the mountain, and then I suspect this mischievous Treasurer will find himself in rather an awkward position, on that narrow ledge of the rock." Turning to the soldier who remained in attendance, he then gave the necessary orders for the party to assemble with all despatch.

"But I marvel, Lena," he continued, after the man disappeared, "why you came to me, in this business, for Walther is surely under the special protection of Father Paul, and he could have given you aid, as well as I, and would himself no doubt have gone to your son's rescue."

"Walther is no child of mine!" replied the shepherdess, in a deep, impressive voice.

"Not yours, say you!" exclaimed Reding, with infinite amazement, both at the meaning and the manner of her words; "he has ever borne your name, and shared your dwelling!"

"Ay, so he has," returned Lena, "but again I say he is no child of mine."

"You astonish me! does Father Paul know this?"

"He is the only man who does!" was Lena's reply.

"Yet he has ever been as a father to him!"

"More than a father! his father was a villain, but the hermit has trained him from his infancy in the ways of piety, and truth."

"And he is not your child?"

"I never saw him, till Father Paul brought him to my chalet, when he was more than two months old."

"Woman!" said Reding, sternly taking her by the wrist, whilst he kept his eyes fixed with

searching gaze upon her countenance, "I suspect there is something wrong under all this pretence; and until I have fully investigated it, the assistance I too rashly promised you, must be withheld. If a holy man like Father Paul, has, for his own reasons, so long thought it right to keep this secret, why come you now, amidst the turmoil and trouble of war, whilst my mind is harassed by the depending and doubtful fortunes of my country, to disturb me in the dead of the night, by betraying my best friend, in a matter that concerns no man but himself?"

"Because it concerns you far more, Herr Reding, as I can quickly prove," returned Lena in an impressive voice. "I know not Father Paul's motives for his secrecy; he never told them to me, and I am guilty of no breach of confidence. My first mission hither, was to seek him to shrive a wounded man on the mountain—"

"Ha! then there has been fighting there, already?"

"No, Herr Reding. The French had left him in their flight. He prayed earnestly to see a priest, and on my way to the Hermit, I first learnt the meditated attack of Michael Graaf."

"And you forgot the wishes of the dying man, in your anxiety to circumvent him?"

"No," said Lena calmly, "that man told me a strange story, that made me anxious to speak with you, before I went to the Hermit. He told me the real parentage of Walther Stanz, and commanded me to deliver you these papers," and as she spoke, she presented the certificates the soldier had confided to her care. "I have come hither, Herr Reding," she then continued, "to claim your protection for Walther Graaf, your own sister's son, and when you have looked at those papers, I feel certain you will no longer hesitate to grant it."

"What do I see!" exclaimed the General, hastily glancing his eyes over the writings, "the certificates of Clarice Reding's marriage with Michael Graaf, and the baptism of their

son ! signed by Father Paul and Louis Brentano ! Woman, this is a forgery on the very face of it, for the Hermit never yet admitted to me, his knowledge of my sister's having borne a child !”

“ But he knew it, nevertheless, for he brought the infant himself to my chalet ; that child is Walther Stanz, whom he has watched over with the anxiety of a father.”

“ Then why conceal his parentage ?”

“ It was the mother's wish ; I know no more ! I had lost a babe, only twenty-four hours before he came to the mountain, and with my husband's consent, I agreed to rear Walther as my own, and have loved him as much as if he were.”

“ But how happens it, you have now made these discoveries ?” demanded Reding. “ How came you possessed of these papers, and what sudden impulse sent you here at this strange hour, to tell me all this mysterious and bewildering history ?”

“ Did not this same Louis Brentano,” rejoined Lena, pointing to the signature at the bottom of the certificate, “ once admit to you, in Milan, — the possibility of your sister’s death ?”

“ He did, but I have never been able to discover any traces of the child, and marvel greatly where you learnt such a circumstance.”

“ Have I not already told you, we found a dying soldier in the mill,” returned the shepherdess, “ that man is Louis Brentano ; by his wish I came hither, and he is ready to swear, not only to the birth of the child, but that it was conveyed away from Milan, by Father Paul !”

“ And he wishes the Hermit to shrive him you say ?”

“ If he survives till our return ; but he has already made a full confession to Walther and myself,” she replied.

“ And the young man knows his parentage,” demanded the General.

“He has not the slightest suspicion of it,” replied Lena. “He heard the story, as far as the dying man could tell it, but he had no reason to apply it to himself, and I thought it best to leave all further disclosures to you, and Father Paul. But, oh, Herr Reding, however strange all this may sound, I implore you to lose no time in sending him aid against Michael Graaf. Bethink you if he should chance in self-defence to shed his blood—his father’s blood—how utterly his whole hopes and happiness would be blighted in this world, and how bitterly you will have cause to repent, if by an ill-timed delay, this young man, so noble, and so worthy of your kindred, should fall a second victim to the remorseless Treasurer.”

There was a wild energy in the words and manner of the shepherdess, as she uttered these impressive words, which notwithstanding the strangeness of her story, and the confusion with which she had related it, at once carried conviction to the heart of her listener. He

thought it possible she might be deceived, but he felt assured she had no intention to deceive. All doubt and hesitation were at an end.

"Lena," he said, "I have often heard the Hermit speak of you with high commendation, and during the whole of this national struggle, you have displayed a noble courage and self-devotion to the cause of your country, which I cannot fail to respect. All this makes it impossible for me longer to disbelieve what you so solemnly assert, more especially, as I myself saw, and recognised this same Louis Brentano in yesterday's battle, though he had exchanged a priest's for a soldier's garb. There is a strange coincidence certainly, between his confession, and the fact of Father Paul having committed an unknown child to your care. The motives of this holy man for the secrecy he has preserved concerning this transaction, we will not now presume to decide on, but I will myself return with you, in his company, to the mill, and in your presence, and that of this apostate Priest

I shall be fully authorised by my near relationship to Clarice and her child, to call upon him for an explanation."

"But the first thing to be done is to master Michael Graaf," returned his eager listener.

"And that shall be done quickly," was Redding's reply. "Follow me," and putting his pistols in his belt, and buckling his sword around his waist, with hat in hand, he preceded her, with long and hurried strides from the cottage.

The hopes of Lena swelled high, and the more so, when she heard the General, as soon as he reached the open air, give orders that twenty five horses, (nearly all the patriots possessed) should be immediately brought round to the quarter of Father Paul, by the men, who in obedience to his former orders, were by this time fully equipped for a march.

"I will await them there," he said, and then making a sign to the shepherdess, he strode on through the darkness.

They soon reached the hovel where the Hermit resided, and neither bolt nor bar impeded their entrance. There was no light, but they passed by the moon through the narrow clefts of the door, and it was some moments before they discerned a pallet near it, on which lay Father Paul, in his usual garments, with only a blanket wound 'round a gillow.

He lay slept profoundly.

Few indeed are the wants of man, when he is not absorbed by that craving appetite for self-indulgence, which luxury creates; and poverty and deprivation, whose pangs are even magnified by comparison with wealth, inflict little pain on him, who has voluntarily chosen them as the better part, and regards them as the means of salvation. Father Paul, in his lonely cell, had long been inured to both, and whilst he was accustomed to make his bed upon the rock, and drink only the water of the spring, the enjoyments of those who dwell in cities would have been to him a torture and a miser-

But fatigue made his sleep that night more than usually profound, and even the well known voice of Aloys Reding had twice to call on him before he started from his bed.

"My friend," he eagerly exclaimed, the instant he sat erect, "I trust no new mischance has brought you hither."

"Walther Stanz is in danger," was the laconic reply, "and we must mount and make all speed to his succour."

"Have the French dared a second time to attack the gallant youth?" inquired the Hermit, as he followed Reding into the open air.

"No! this time it is a private affair of his old enemy Michael Graaf's. He seeks revenge, as Lena tells me, for the deceit practised upon him at the pass, last night, and threatens if Walther is not slain in this attack, to give him up to the French to be shot as a traitor, or for the former robbery of the treasury, I know not which, and has gone with twenty men to surprise him at the mill."

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D. C.
1945

and though the remainder of the way was steep, it was comparatively short.

The Hermit readily admitted the wisdom of this precaution ; the whole party was quickly mounted, and Lena having been placed by the General's command behind one of the soldiers, they put the horses to their utmost speed, and rode in silence down the valley.

Thus they advanced, until they nearly reached the first line of French outposts, when Aloys Reding suddenly reined in his horse, and dismounted. The whole party followed his example, and leaving the animals in charge of two of the men, till others came up on foot to reconduct them to the camp, they rapidly commenced the ascent of the mountain.

The feelings of Father Paul, as they proceeded, were wildly agitated. For the first time, since the death of Clarice, did he repent of having concealed the real parentage of Walther Stanz. But he had done her pleasure ; it was her last command to him, that unless by some

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he exempted him from many snares and temptations, whilst the education he conferred on him, elevated his mind to higher objects, and made him indifferent to the want of worldly advantages. By thus rendering him independent of human opinion, and the vicissitudes of human affairs, the old man felt that he had conferred on his pupil, the greatest benefit that man can bestow on man.

The object of the labours of twenty years had been accomplished; Walther Stanz had proved himself, even in the eyes of his country, all the enthusiastic Hermit had long panted to behold him, and the danger of his pupil, that night, for the first time awakened doubts in his mind, as to the propriety of the deception he had practised. Whilst he toiled up the mountain in silence, there was a wild struggle between contending feelings in his heart, till at length he decided, that if the disclosure of the secret could in any way conduce to Walther's safety, it should at length be made.

He little thought how vain was this decision ; that the story was no longer in his own keeping, and that Providence had, at its own time, found a way to baffle all his calculations, and bring to light, without his aid, the hidden mystery of years.

How common is it, for men thus to miscalculate the value of their actions ; many an unheeded word, and thought, and deed, fructifying at hazard, like a seed borne by the wind, and producing vast results ; whilst those which cost painful efforts and sacrifices, chance as frequently renders ineffectual !

CHAPTER XI.

I doubt some danger does approach you nearly.
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here.

SHAKESPEARE. MACBETH.

WALTHER STANZ continued for some time after the departure of Lena, to muse on the character the wounded soldier had given of Michael Graaf, without in the least suspecting, that his own fate was involved in the narrative of the Treasurer's early crimes. Involuntarily he contrasted the degraded position of this once prosperous citizen, who, in spite of wealth, and

honours, and long prosperity, was now the scorn of every honest man, with that of Father Paul; the solitary, poor, but holy Hermit, whom his virtues, and his sanctity had sufficed to make the respected arbiter of his country's destiny.

Yet there was nothing marvellous in all this, for virtue, is a power; whilst sin prevails only by the borrowed strength of gold, or intellect, or hypocrisy.

"Thank heaven," thought the youth, "that Justine is rescued from this bad man's snares, and when the war is ended, we shall marry and can then boldly set him at defiance."

Here a deep groan from the dying man interrupted Walther's reflections, and with infinite tenderness, he administered every thing in his power, for his relief; but his pangs seemed more of the mind, than the body, for mortification had commenced in his wounds, and their first keen agony had entirely subsided.

Though the burning pine branch had been

frequently replaced, it was difficult to maintain a light in the loft, and Brentano evidently watched the uncertain flame with restless uneasiness, and on the slightest movement of Walther, betrayed an exceeding terror of being again left alone.

The young soldier pitied his distress, and anxious to overlook the proceedings of his men below, at length proposed, if he could bear removal, to have him carried to the kitchen, where, relieved from all fear of darkness or solitude, he would have the comfort of a blazing fire, and the constant company of the soldiers.

To this he gladly assented, "he was in no pain," he said; his wounds had ceased to bleed, and two men could easily lower him down the ladder, by means of the large horse cloak, in which his comrades had brought him thither.

Walther lost no time in putting this plan in execution, and though it was attended with

somewhat more difficulty than he at first anticipated, it was ere long accomplished, and the poor sufferer being laid on a bed of hay, near the blazing hearth, though greatly exhausted, expressed himself very grateful for the change.

Ere long he appeared to sink into a quiet slumber, and Walther himself, having much need of rest, lay down at the opposite side of the fire, and was soon fast asleep.

Half an hour thus passed away, and there was only one man awake in the mill, when all its inmates were startled by an impatient and repeated knocking at the outer door. Walther sprang up in an instant, and in a loud voice demanded who was there?

“Your own uncle Hans, to be sure; cannot you open and let him in?” answered a squeaking voice, which he instantly recognized to be the tailor’s, and accordingly began forthwith to remove the fastenings, with which the entrance was secured.

“Ha, ha,” meanwhile continued the little man, “fast bind, fast find, I suppose you consider, but you had better make haste, or a host of traitors may pop in at my heels, like fish in a mill stream.”

“Are you not alone then ?” demanded Walther, whilst for a moment he held the last bolt in his hand.

“Oh yes, as lonely as half a pair of scissors ; but there are plenty following after, so by every Saint in the calendar, I beg you will ask no questions, but let me in !”

“Hans, in the name of fortune can that be you, what has happened to you ?” cried the young soldier, when the little man stepped into the kitchen, with a consequential air, which combined with his rueful appearance, excited the risible muscles of all present.

He was indeed a strange figure. His face never of the brightest hue, was blackened and smoked by the explosion, through which he had effected his escape from the French, and the rain

drops had washed in the dirt, and diversified it into such a variety of strange forms, that his cheeks bore no unapt resemblance to a map of the moon's disk; his uncovered locks were singed like a sheep's head, in the hands of a Scotch blacksmith, his neckcloth was twisted hind part before, as if he had just escaped the gallows; one tail of his coat was gone, and the other, with the pocket ripped open, depended by a single thread at his side; whilst to complete his costume, his stockings hung in large folds around the slender ancles of his thin crooked legs, and his shoes were completely hidden by a mass of mud. Yet utterly unconscious of the strange spectacle he presented, Hans was greatly nettled by the reception he met with.

"Is this me indeed!" he cried; "don't you know your own uncle, you blockhead! who the devil do you take me for, if I am not myself? who else do you think would trouble themselves to come scrambling up here in the dark, and

the rain, for your service, when they might lie snug in their beds, and leave you to be shot, without their being a tittle the worse. He! Master Walther, who the devil do you take me for? What are you grinning at, you fools! Are you all drunk, for if you are sober, you cannot pretend to say you don't know Hans Brunk, at the sign of the Golden Shears, in the great place at Lucerne, the best tailor in the four cantons? What is there laughable in that?"

"Nothing certainly," replied one of the soldiers, "and yet you must excuse us," and then the whole party laughed ten times louder than before.

"Walther you confounded fool, you are worse than any of them," cried Hans in a perfect rage, as the mirth around him grew quite ungovernable. "Surely an honest, pains-taking, orderly citizen, is not a fit laughing stock for a parcel of beardless boys! Catch me troubling myself to come this way to you again, when you give your uncle such a reception. Pretty man-

ners truly! What would Father Paul say, if he saw you!"

"What would he say, if he saw you, sir?" returned Walther, whom the tailor's anger had completely deprived of all power to restrain his risibility.

"Saw me, Sir!" cried Hans in a greater fury than ever, "what do you mean sir. A decently clad citizen, is not an object to be made a show of, like an ape, or a dancing bear. Heaven have mercy on me, these wars have sadly changed you, young man!"

"And so they have you, sir," returned the incorrigible soldier, "or rather your clothes! should say—your coat especially!"

"Heh! what's that you say! my coat! I made it myself, and I'll lay any man a wager, there is not a better fit, nor a neater article in all Switzerland!"

"What it may have been," replied Walther, "I cannot pretend to say, for there is too little of it left now, for me to be able to judge."

“Why, by all the saints, I have lost more than half of it,” cried Hans in utter amazement, and consternation, when with both his hands he had ascertained the deficiencies of his upper garment. It must have been that rascally French sergeant! I saw him cutting up broad cloth to make wadding for his gun, but little dreamt it was part of my own fleece.”

“And your hair, sir,” persisted the young man “has he taken that to make wadding of likewise?”

“My hair! why truly it is all shrivelled up like the bristles on a singed hog’s back; that must have been the explosion; ah, Walther, Walther,” he added in a milder tone, “you may laugh if you please, and I dare say I am an odd figure, to say the least of it, but it was all done in your service.”

“You amaze me, uncle,” returned the young man.

“Yet it is true nevertheless! and I should have told you all about it, long before this, only

your confounded grinning put every thing else out of my head. But are you sure the door is fast?"

"As fast as wooden bars, and bolts, can make it," was the reply.

"And your rifles all loaded, and primed."

"Yes, every one of them!"

"Then give me a cup of kirschenwasser, my breath is quite spent—I am not used to clambering mountains by moonlight at a full gallop, and what with smoke first, and fogs afterwards, my throat wants washing."

Walther quickly brought the desired liquor, and the tailor seated himself on a log beside the fire.

"Well, that does a man's heart good," he said, smacking his lips after swallowing a large cupful of his favourite spirit, "now I am ready to face Michael Graaf, and the whole pack of them."

"Michael Graaf!" exclaimed Walther with

amazement, "surely there is no chance of his coming here to-night."

"That is all you know about the matter," returned the tailor consequentially, "but it is well for us all, mayhap, that some men can see further into a mill stone. What! do you think I have come here for, eh! not to be laughed at you may depend upon it; no, no, I am a match for most men, I flatter myself, whether my doublet is old or new, and Michael Graaf has found that to his cost before now, as you very well know."

"Have you detected him in any new treason?" inquired Walther anxiously.

"Why, have I not told you? did I not bid you make fast the door, the moment I came in?" returned Hans, with a bewildered look of amazement, for what with the brandy the French had given him, and the keen mountain air, and his copious potation of kirschenwasser, his faculties were not in the very clearest order imaginable.

"You have told me nothing," answered Walther, "and though you seem to have some serious apprehension of evil, I cannot even guess at its import."

"Then you are a confounded blockhead! that is all, I can say," rejoined the tailor, "and my labour has been all thrown away, and I have had my wits nearly frightened out of me, and my coat torn off my back, and my head singed to the very bone, yet you have the impudence to tell me, you are not a bit the wiser for my pains. Walther Stanz, you are not worthy to be called my nephew—I can say no more—I scorn to say more to a blockhead, who has no more brains than a needle without an eye; but waken me, when the Treasurer comes, that's all, so a good night to you, and don't forget to have your rifles ready primed, for five to fifteen is terrible odds, you understand me," and stretching himself at full length upon the ground, he seemed to have forgotten all his former apprehensions, and to be fully

determined to enjoy the refreshment of a comfortable sleep.

But Walther was too seriously alarmed by his strange discourse, even disjointed as it was, to leave him to the tranquil enjoyment of his repose, till he had gained more distinct information, as to the motive of his visit ; and shaking him somewhat roughly by the shoulder, he again inquired what he knew of Michael Graaf?

“The Treasurer, say you,” he exclaimed starting up at the well known name, “if you don’t fight like bull-dogs, my lads, we are all lost, as sure as if the executioner’s axe was on our necks. Staffer is with him, and twenty other rascals, and if they catch you, Master Walther, you are to be shot as a spy, or a traitor, I am not clear which. But why do you stand staring at me, boy ; why don’t you give the confounded rascals a peppering out of the window, to prevent them breaking in the door ? Have you a spare gun for me, eh ? I have not had much practice with the rifle, but yet out of

the garret window, I think I could manage to wing my old friend the Treasurer."

"There is no one here yet," said Walther, "but where learnt you all this?"

"I overheard them.—Yes—I did.—To be sure I did, that is the truth," answered Hans, with some perplexity; "and if they have not come, they are coming, which is nearly the same thing, and if I had not given you warning, your head would have been off in twenty four hours, depend upon it."

"If this is true, we must be on the alert," said the young soldier anxiously, turning to his companions.

"True, indeed! when was I known as a liar? answer me that, sir!" cried the tailor, who though not absolutely drunk, was unusually quarrelsome. "I have told you the truth, and the whole truth, so don't blame me, if you don't profit by it."

"I fear this is but a weak fortress to resist so numerous a party," replied Walther, without

noticing this testy interruption, "but we will do the best we can. Karl and Martin, in the first place push that old deal cupboard against the door; it will be a better security than either bolt, or bar; and Fritz and Pierre must bring bundles of hay from the loft, and pile them as tightly as possible behind the window shutters, where balls are most likely to make their way through the thin planks—meanwhile, I will mount to the highest casement, which overlooks the paths from the valley, and see if I can descry any signs of an approaching enemy."

"And I will come with you," stammered Hans, who had sense enough left to know that in case of fighting, he should be safer any where else than where he was.

With the agility of a squirrel, Walther bounded up the ladder into the loft, but Hans was less expert, and after one or two unsuccessful attempts, apparently forgetful of his purpose, he seated himself on the lowest step of the ladder, and in two minutes fell fast asleep.

Walther soon found there was no opening from the upper part of the building, from whence he could obtain the view he desired, except that in the small loft where Justine had lain down to repose, but though unwilling to disturb her, the need was urgent, and entering it after a moment's hesitation, he advanced with as little noise as possible, across the boarded floor, towards the narrow aperture, through which fell a pale declining moon. Involuntarily his eyes turned towards the pallet of the sleeping girl, and his heart beat with uncontrollable emotion, as he descried in that dim light, the shadowy outline of her reclining figure.

"They come in pursuit of her doubtlessly," he thought, "but I will die sooner than resign her."

Gently he then turned towards the window, but as he did so, the butt end of his rifle came in contact with a wooden rake, that rested against a corner of the wall, and brought it with a tremendous clatter to the ground.

“Walther ! Lena ! help, help, we are beset !” exclaimed the awakened girl, in a voice of extreme terror, as she sprang up wildly from her bed. “Who is there ? answer me, Lena—is it you ?”

“It is Walther Stanz,” replied a well known voice, that at once removed her terrors, “I grieve that my awkwardness has alarmed you, dearest Justine, and should not have intruded here, had not a threatened danger compelled me.”

“Alas, Walther,” she returned, “are we not then in safety in this lonely spot, even for one night ?”

“I trusted we were,” was his reply, “but my uncle Hans has brought word, that Staffer and the Treasurer are coming forthwith to attack us. I know not how to believe him, but it is fit to guard against surprise, and this is the only window in the building that overlooks the path they must ascend.”

"Oh ! woe is me," said the girl in accents of despair, "what troubles have I not involved you in. I feel it is on my account alone that Michael Graaf pursues you with such unrelenting rancour. Yet do not forsake me, Walther—though indeed I sometimes feel that for your sake I ought to take courage, and return to him at once. But indeed —indeed, I cannot. Call it weakness, or selfishness, or what you will, Walther, but do not cast me from you."

"Fear nothing, my own Justine," returned her lover, "though the Church has not yet united us, the vows which we have plighted in the sight of heaven have bound us together as indissolubly, for life and death ; and I will shed the last drop of my blood, ere I resign you. But in truth you must not think that your love is the sole cause, for which this bad man hates me ! have you forgotten the Treasury, Justine ? the bag of gold—and more than all, his baffled treason at the pass ? I marvel not he seeks my

life, for Providence has strangely used me as an instrument to cross him in his wicked purposes."

"Then wherefore tarry here to meet him?" demanded the maiden, "there is yet time to fly, and surely there are more paths than one to the valley?"

"Were I on the Righi I could find a dozen," was Walther's reply, "but all here is strange to me; and besides, Justine, flight is but the coward's part. My General placed me here to fight, and not to fly, and I should ill requite his confidence, if, on the first report of an approaching enemy, I skulked like a beaten hound from my post. Besides—the struggle between Michael Graaf and myself must, sooner or later, come to a close; I have done him too much injury, for him to pardon me, or tamely submit. His character is gone, and he is desperate, and whilst we both survive, he never will forego his victim. I fear him not—neither do I return his hatred, and for his persecution, I make all

due allowance; but still the fairest blossoms of life would be withered by the perpetual consciousness, that a relentless enemy for ever held the sword suspended above my head, and I would that the struggle were ended this very night. I have a strange presentiment that it will be so, and that the blood of one of us will seal the termination of our enmity."

"It drives me distracted, to hear you talk thus," cried Justine, half choked with tears; "it is not like you, Walther! indeed it is not! and retreat cannot be disgraceful, when your men are insufficient for the defence of the post. Though the tracks on the mountain are unknown to us, we cannot wander far astray, and, at the camp, you need not fear my uncle's malice! Other hands will punish him, Walther! I fear he has been too guilty to escape for long; but be not you his executioner! he has been kind to me, very kind, and though avarice and ambition have led him astray, his heart was not always hard, and may again relent!"

"I bear him no malice, and do not wish to injure him, for he is your uncle, Justine," said the youth, "but I must do my duty."

"This post is of no importance," persisted the maiden, "the morning is drawing nigh, when, even as a look-out, it will be no more required, and the preservation of your life is the first duty you owe your country. Where is Lena? she would say the same that I do; she would tell you that courage misapplied is madness. I will call her hither, and though you will not listen to me, perhaps her words may prevail."

"Lena is gone to the camp," said Walther in a calm, firm voice, that at once arrested the footsteps of Justine.

"In search of assistance doubtless!" she rejoined.

"She knows nothing of the threatened danger. Hans Brunk arrived here since her departure, and he has drank so much, that his brain is bewildered, and his story broken, and

scarcely intelligible, but I have gleaned enough to feel certain—Ha! Justine,” he exclaimed suddenly changing his tone, “do you not see figures moving along, behind that clump of pines? look! look! they are springing up, one after another, from the ravine, on to that broad rock, and then they glide into the shadow of the copse—five, six, that makes ten I have counted!”

“And there is another—and another—and another,” cried Justine. “Oh, Walther, why would you not hearken to me, and fly. What is to be done—you cannot have the smallest chance against such numbers!”

Be calm, my poor girl, though they are more numerous than I expected, yet matters are not so desperate, as you fear. Call Karl and Herman hither with their rifles, and whilst the others remain below, we will open a sharp fire on these fellows, from this window, and keep them at a distance as long as we can.”

Justine lost not an instant in complying

with this request, and during her absence, Walther remained at the casement, anxiously watching the movements of the enemy, who were still beyond gun shot.

He saw them emerge from the pine grove, and approach in single file, along the narrow path that led from it, to the front of the mill, and in the pale light of the moon, he could just distinguish that some wore the French uniform, whilst others were clad in the ill assorted garments of volunteers. Though he could not see the features of the tall, athletic man, who marched at the head of the party, he had no doubt from his gait, that it was Staffer, whilst with shuffling pace, Michael Graaf brought up the rear. Each man carried a rifle, or a musket on his shoulder, and their glittering bayonets flashed back the rays of the silver moon.

Even to one of unflinching and courageous heart, like Walther Stanz, there was something awful in the spectacle of these ministers of death, gliding on with stealthy pace, amidst that wild,

and silent, and gigantic scene, intent on bloodshed; more especially, when aware, that these tools of a bad man's passions, thus dared to violate the solemn tranquillity of nature, for the purpose of accomplishing his own murder. But the danger dismayed him not; on the contrary it excited all his powers to the utmost, and inspired him with a strength of purpose, and tranquil fortitude, he had never known till then.

Little did he dream of the danger of parricide, he that night incurred by his bravery; nor did Hans once remember, when he clambered at length into the loft, with a rifle, the especial injunction, which Lena had given him to insist on Walther's flight. His brief sleep had somewhat sobered him, but that circumstance never once recurred to his mind.

Justine speedily followed him, with two of the soldiers, and no sooner was the foremost of the advancing file of the enemy within the range of their rifles, than Walther gave the word of command, and they all four fired simultane-

ously, some from the casement, and others through crevices in the wooden walls.

One soldier fell, either wounded or dead, and Staffer stood still in amazement. But he was not a man, when once engaged in an adventure, to be easily daunted.

“Herr Michael!” he cried, “did I not tell you how it would be? This is a pretty beginning; but windows are luckily scant, I see, in the hovel, and we must not stand here like fools to be shot at, but push on, round that corner to the left, and attack the door at once. On, my brave fellows; keep your bullets till you see your enemies, and creep under the shelving bank. It will screen us, till within six feet of the mill.”

But ere he could himself spring down beneath the broken ground to which he pointed, another volley was fired by Walther and his men, and though only the arm of one Frenchman was grazed, and the hat of another knocked off, yet it tended greatly to quicken the soldier's obedi-

ence to his commands, and in less than two minutes, not one of the whole party was to be seen from the cottage.

Walther was convinced that it would be useless to remain any longer in the loft, and hastily imploring Justine not to expose herself needlessly to danger, by descending to the kitchen, he commanded his men to follow him thither, with all speed ; for it was quite evident, that the utmost ingenuity and promptitude, would be necessary to defend the entrance against the attack of so numerous an enemy.

CHAPTER XII.

" Old man ! there is no power in holy men,
Nor charm in prayer—nor purifying form
Of penitence—nor outward look—nor fast—
Nor agony, nor greater than all these, ,
The innate tortures of that deep despair,
Which is remorse without the fear of hell,
But all in all sufficient to itself,
Would make a hell of heaven—can exorcise
From out the unbounded spirit the quick sense,
Of its own sins !—There is no future pang
Can deal that justice on the self-condemned,
He deals on his own soul !"

BYRON.

WHEN Walther and his followers reached the kitchen, he found that according to his orders, a pile of hay was raised against the window, only leaving one, or two small apertures, by which a watch might be kept on the movements of the enemy without, and the rifles of those

within, discharged against them. Not a living creature was to be seen, when Walther first fixed his eyes at one of these loop-holes ; but in less than a minute, Staffer and six of his men sprang up on to the narrow grassy ledge, in front, and rushing to the door, were safe, before he had time to take aim, on a spot, where his bullets could not touch them.

Unfortunately there was no salient point in the cottage, which commanded the entrance, but the young mountaineer and his men kept up such a brisk fire on the soldiers, as they successively sprang above the cliff, and attempted to reach it, that several were wounded, and two fell back lifeless over the precipice.

Staffer and those who were already in safety, heeded not their wild cry of despair, and continued with unwavering perseverance, to labour with hatchets, and hammers, to break down the feeble barrier that opposed their progress, without the besieged having any means of interrupting them.

The door had been fashioned in former times, when it had rarely been found necessary to use even the wooden bar appended to it, and though since Walther undertook the defence of the mill, it had been more strongly secured, it was not calculated to resist, for long, the heavy blows that now rained heavily, and thick, upon its trembling wood-work.

Ere long it fell in, with a tremendous crash, and a loud shout from the assailants, proclaimed their exultation at this speedy success. But they soon discovered that they had thereby gained little ground. The large, heavy deal cupboard, which had been dragged there from the further end of the kitchen, completely obstructed their advance. Walther had taken the precaution to have it fixed to the spot, by sloping stakes, driven deep into the ground, at the back and sides, and to the utter amazement of Staffer and his followers, not the power of a dozen men, could move it one inch.

Unfortunately, another expedient was quickly

devised. The old cupboard was at least two feet lower than the doorway, and though Walter had previously not overlooked the necessity for securing this aperture, by a kind of palisade, he could procure no materials for putting his device in execution, and, fully conscious of the danger, he was compelled to leave it unguarded against.

In the hurry attending the agitated struggle, he had for a moment forgotten this untoward circumstance, when a loud cry from Justine, who stood near the top of the ladder leading to the loft, suddenly called his attention to the untimely aperture.

The dawn was now breaking, but its grey light, which had for a time streamed broadly in above the wardrobe, was at that moment obstructed, and Walter saw, with horror, that one of the enemy had thrust more than half his body through the narrow opening, and grasping the further ledge of the wood-work with both

his hands, had already placed one knee on the top of it.

Not a moment was to be lost. Making a sign of silence to Justine, he sprang up the ladder, so as to take an unerring aim, and before the unfortunate Frenchman was aware that his movements were observed, a bullet pierced his brain, and he fell back lifeless, amongst his dismayed companions.

But already fiercely excited by the opposition they had encountered, the fury of their attack was redoubled by this misadventure. Like madmen they continued to batter against the immoveable cupboard, though none ventured again to mount it, and those within the mill, repeatedly heard the voice of Staffer, cheering the men to perseverance, but nothing ever gave evidence that Michael Graaf was of the party.

In fact the Treasurer, though very willing to pay wages to others, in order to gratify his malignant passions, was as careful as ever of his own life, and trusting that his absence would

be unobserved, during the darkness and confusion, had remained safely crouched under the shelter of the bank in front of the mill, whilst Staffer and the other tools of his villany, were manfully daring the brunt of the attack, and recklessly shedding their blood, with no other impulse, than the desire of gain, and a natural love of fighting.

Like a demon which mocks at the strife it has stirred up amongst mankind, the old man, with his hands clasped around his knees, sat on a broken stone, listening in safety, with a smile of contemptuous derision on his pale lips, to the reports of the guns and the groans of the dying.

Yet there was deep and fearful anxiety in his heart; the possession of all his long hoarded wealth, the power and respect he trusted that gold might yet secure him; nay, his very life itself depended upon the events of that night.

The suspicions of the French General could alone be removed by the capture of Walther, for he doubted not that the high spirited

young man would be the first to repel the charge of their collusion with indignation, and to prove, beyond dispute, the bitter enmity that subsisted between them. Nor had he forgotten the robbery in Lucerne, from the disgrace of which, it appeared to his diseased mind, he had no chance of escaping, till another had suffered the penalty of the crime. The death of Walther in the combat of that night, though it might gratify his thirst for vengeance, would effect neither of these purposes, and his bad passions being ever under the control of his cunning, he had strictly commanded Staffer, at every hazard, to secure the young mountaineer alive. On this, the success of all his projects mainly depended; and again and again as the wind howled fitfully around him, and the report of fire arms, and the shouts of the combatants, rang loud and wildly on his ear, he listened with perturbed intensity for the voice of Walther amidst the din, that he might be assured, from time to time, of his existence.

Yet though thus harrowing was his anxiety, he little dreamt how entirely every hope and every feeling which had cheered, or softened his lonely and grovelling course, was involved in the life of the gallant youth, or even at that moment, when he was unconsciously devising schemes for the destruction of his own most cherished wishes, he would have rushed onward, coward as he was, before the guns of his own men, and braved alike all danger and dishonor, to rescue his long sought child, from the abyss he had prepared for him.

Staffer and his men were in the meantime doing his work bravely. Blow after blow of their hatchets, in quick succession, fell upon the antique cupboard; the pannels at both sides of it successively gave way, till, at length, the soldiers, with loud shouts, threw its fragments far and wide, and rushed exultingly into the room beyond.

The discharge of three rifles welcomed their entrance, but, owing to the general movement,

only one ball took effect, by slightly wounding the foremost of the party. The French thought only of vengeance, but not a creature was to be seen in the kitchen, save their own, poor, dying comrade, Louis Brentano, who, from his bed of straw, in faint cries demanded quarter.

They heeded him not; all their attention was directed to the trap door, from whence the bullets rained thick and fast, without their having a possibility of returning the injury. For a moment they were at fault; there was no ladder to be seen; that usually serving as a staircase to the upper story, having been drawn up by Walther's command, when he, and his party, had retreated into the loft; and even had they attempted to supply the deficiency by the scattered bundles of hay, or the fragments of the furniture in the deserted dwelling, to raise the pile within reach of the trap door, under the very muzzles of the guns above, was a task that not one of those soldiers, even brave as they

were, was sufficiently reckless of life to undertake.

“ Michael Graaf may do that work himself, if it pleases him,” said Staffer doggedly, “ there has been havoc enough already, in this mad business, without our standing like sheep to be slaughtered. Eh, Michael, what do you say to that ? where are you old boy ; the smoke is so thick, there is no seeing either friends, or enemies ; but you can answer me, for all that ; do you hear, Herr Treasurer ? ”

But no voice responded to this appeal, and with some alarm, for his stipulated payment was at stake, Staffer again cried out with a loud voice, demanding whether any one knew if Michael was dead, or alive.

The frequent repetition of his name, at length reached the ears of the old man himself, and judging in spite of his reluctance to face powder, it was high time to appear amongst the players of his desperate game, he arose and glided into the cottage.

The possibility of Walther's capture for a moment gladdened his heart, as he did so, but the confusion he there found prevailing, soon dispelled the flattering hope. The dense and noxious smoke of gunpowder, filled the whole kitchen, so that those at the trap door, no longer able distinctly to take aim, and unwilling to waste their ammunition, had ceased firing, whilst Staffer and his surviving men, finding it impossible to make any efficient attack upon their enemies, had gathered into a corner of the room, where the balls of those above, were least likely to take effect. As the smoke flitted to and fro, the Treasurer saw them for a moment, in the red glare of the fire that still blazed in the middle of the floor, but there was another object met his astonished gaze, that at once diverted and rivetted his attention. It was the figure of the dying Brentano, who, bewildered and appalled by the wild struggle around, sat up like a ghastly corpse upon his bed, listening with an eager and

wandering eye, to the frequently repeated name of him who had tempted him in youth into the paths of sin; and, as the evil sound hovered, and echoed around him, it appeared to his distorted fancy, as if the voices of evil spirits beyond the grave, were exulting at the approach of their destined victim.

The face of the wretched sufferer, was pale and haggard, from fear and loss of blood; the convulsive lines of death were strongly drawn around his mouth, his black beard was unshorn, and a handkerchief clotted with his own gore, bound his wounded head. Yet the Treasurer knew him at the first glance.

All the circumstances of their former intercourse, had haunted him too fearfully for twenty years, for that countenance ever to be forgotten, and the fearful start of Brentano as his eyes fell upon Graaf, proved that he too had not failed to recognise, with horror, the man whose name alone had given rise to feelings the most appalling.

Michael was no doubt greatly changed in many respects, but still there were fewer wrinkles on his smooth, soft face, than on that of the thin, and fiery spirited priest ; the expression of his eyes was unaltered, and as these two men gazed a moment in silence on each other, the crimes of their past lives simultaneously appeared to each in fearful and distinct array.

Brentano was the first to speak.

“Avaunt, tempter !” he exclaimed in a hollow voice. “by thy subtle wiles, have I been lured to the very brink of perdition ; but away, away, nor add the torture of thy presence to the pangs of death.”

“Madman !” muttered Graaf, in low, tremulous tones, “what harm did I ever do thee ? did I bid thee laugh the creed of thy church to scorn ? did I force thee to take the wages of sin, to purchase earth’s vain pleasures ? did I make thee break thy vows to heaven, and stain

thy soul with the long catalogue of glaring crimes ; that perjury brings in its train. Yet each, and all these, thou hast to answer for, and one deed blacker still, when, in an evil moment, you tempted me to yield up the innocent to be your victim."

" Base hypocrite," cried the dying, a wild and unearthly fire flashing from his eyes, " here it may serve thy turn to cast the burthen of thy guilt upon the head of another, but in the world, where shortly we shall both be summoned to the judgment seat, that will avail thee nothing ! each there must bear the burthen of his own iniquity, and fearful will be thine !"

" Peace villain, on thy life !" cried the Treasurer, now for the first time remembering the presence of Staffer and the soldiers, and observing that they were listening with curiosity and amazement to this extraordinary dialogue.

" No," returned Brentano fiercely, " your proud commands avail not here to silence me,

nor will they hush the voice of Clarice at the heavenly throne, when she recounts her wrongs."

"Peace, or thou diest," muttered Michael between his teeth, and he lent over the wounded man with a look of fearful threatening.

Brentano laughed harshly. "I am too near the grave to fear thee," he muttered, "and my conscience is pure, compared to thine, for I made poor Clarice all the expiation my guilt admitted of, and ere her spirit fled to heaven, she pardoned me, on one condition, which I most rigidly have fulfilled. She made me swear, that you should never know, whilst she survived, that she had borne you a son, and I have kept my vow, for more than twenty years have passed, since I baptized the child; and till to-night, the secret never passed my lips!"

To describe the countenance, or the feelings of Michael Graaf, as he listened to these words, would be equally impossible; never before had

the most remote suspicion flashed upon his mind, that any living man, save Father Paul, had it in his power to satisfy the craving longing of his soul, and for a moment, he was utterly paralyzed with amazement.

Staffer—the soldiers—Walther Stanz—everything on the face of the earth was forgotten, in the wild tumult of his brain.

“Louis—Louis Brentano!” he exclaimed, “tell me if the child yet lives? tell me I entreat, I implore you—tell me where I may find my son?”

The dying man, exhausted by his extraordinary efforts, had fallen back on the straw, and made no answer to this appeal.

“I forgive you all—I will purchase fifty masses for your soul—half my wealth shall be yours, only tell where my child may be found,” he cried, crowding his words on each other, with incredible rapidity.

But his offers and his pardon came too late;

a fearful convulsion shook the frame of the wounded man, and he gave no sign, that he had heard this wild apostrophe.

Michael seized one of his arms, with a cold and shivering hand—it was rigid as iron; with eyes starting from their sockets, he watched the last struggle of life, as he would the axe of an executioner suspended above his head, and when it slowly subsided, when the features of Brentano once more relaxed, and in answer to the renewed and frantic cries of the agonized father, a faint murmur breathed from his parted lips, Michael bent forward, with the eagerness of a maniac to catch the muttered sounds.

“Ask Father Paul,” were the only words that reached his ear, and then feebly making the sign of the cross, the unfortunate Brentano heaved a deep sigh, a faint shudder passed over his limbs, and his spirit departed from its tenement of clay, whilst Michael, unawed by the spectacle of his agony, and engrossed as he ever was, by his own selfishness, continued to entreat

him, in wild and broken accents, to give him tidings of his child.

Staffer in the meantime heard very little, and understood still less of this strange scene, in the latter part of which, the voices of the speakers had been scarcely above their breaths, and every moment grew more and more impatient, at what he considered, a most unnecessary and ill-timed delay. Whilst the Treasurer, overpowered by contending emotions, still hung muttering over the corpse, he took him roughly by the shoulder, calling on him to leave such foolery, and direct them how to proceed against the enemy.

Graaf started up, as if aroused from a trance, and asked in a bewildered murmur if Walther was secured?

"No, confound him," was the reply, "and though four of our best men are shot, and three badly wounded, we are to my thinking no nearer catching the fellow, than we were five hours ago. They have drawn the ladder up

after them into the loft, and though they have left off firing for the last ten minutes, I would rather scale a rock in face of a cannon, than try to climb to that trap door, with the muzzles of a dozen rifles bristling above my head. What is to be done, eh Michael? for my part, I think we had better give it up as a bad business, and go back to the valley in search of our breakfasts."

"Is there no way to get into the upper story from without?" demanded Graaf at length fully conscious of the exigency of the case.

"There is a window, but we have seen the rifles popping out there already, to our cost," returned the farmer gruffly, "so if you have nothing better to propose, you may keep your wisdom to yourself."

"Why not smoke the fellows like rats in their hole," said the old man, with frightful composure. "There is plenty of hay here, and with the help of the scraps of furniture, a blaze could soon be raised, that would roast, or suffocate them all in less than half an hour."

“ But I thought you wanted Walther alive,” demanded Staffer.

“ Yes, yes, and as soon as he smells fire, he will yield himself a prisoner, depend upon it, if it be only to save the life of Justine.”

“ We shall see,” cried Staffer, little heeding the result. “ These dry timbers once lighted, will crackle and flare like a bonfire, so to work my men, with all dispatch, and seizing a huge truss of hay in his arms, as he spoke, all who saw or heard him, glad of a new object of excitement, eagerly followed his example.

But though they moved about in every part of the kitchen, to collect fuel for the meditated conflagration, to their surprise, not an attempt was made to molest them, by those above, and when one of the men remembering that he had seen a huge pile of faggots at one side of the cottage, at length ventured to go out in search of them; he twice returned with his burthen, without any evidence being given that their movements were observed. A third time he departed, and the collection of inflammable ma-

terials arose nearly to the ceiling, without a gun being fired.

"They have exhausted their ammunition," said Staffer, "and without setting the place on fire, I suspect we could now get into the loft, and take Walther Stanz like a sparrow in a trap. They are at their last prayers I dare be sworn, for there is not a footstep to be heard."

He had scarcely uttered these words when the report of a gun, fired close to the cottage, burst suddenly on the air, and was repeated in long reverberation by the surrounding echoes. In an instant it was followed by loud and continued shouts.

For several minutes the whole party believing that an enemy was at hand, stood irresolute how to act, but no sooner had Staffer recognized the voice, whose calls incessantly continued, to be that of the wood-carrier who had recently gone forth, than he rushed out, followed by Michael Graaf and the whole of his men.

CHAPTER XIII.

" 'T were vain to point to what his feelings grew,
It even were doubtful if their victim knew.
There is a war, a chaos of the mind,
When all its elements convulsed, combined—
Lie dark and jarring with perturbed force,
And gnashing with impenitent remorse."

BYRON.

WHILE all this had been going on in the lower part of the miller's house, Walther and his companions expected, with no small anxiety, the succour which Hans had given them reason to hope might be sent by Lena from the Swiss camp. But even when the brightening dawn made visible the pathways on the mountain, Justine, who kept watch at the solitary case-

ment, to the dismay of the tailor, still continued to announce that not a living creature was in sight.

Staffer was not far wrong, when he conjectured that their ammunition was exhausted. It was very nearly so, when their fire was first suspended; and anxious to reserve the scanty residue for any moment of pressing danger, Walther gave orders, that not a shot should be wasted, as long as their assailants remained inactive.

Every moment they expected to hear that succour was in sight, yet the pause in the attack, during Michael's colloquy with Brentano, passed away without this hope being fulfilled.

Minutes hurried on, and all was so comparatively still below, that they knew not what to think, till on a sudden the trampling of feet, and the repeated fall of heavy masses, gave them warning that some new device was resorted to by Staffer. Hans knelt down upon the trap door, and cautiously peeping through a crevice

from whence he could obtain a view of the busy labour of those below, at once conjectured the cause of their activity.

“Walther Stanz,” he said arising from his knees, with as little noise as possible, “if you persist in staying here a minute longer, you won’t have me to keep you company; for if you are fire proof, I am not, and in five minutes there will be a blaze like a bonfire beneath. You may think it necessary to prove your courage by remaining to be roasted as black as a burnt chesnut, but I have nothing but my life to lose, and shall take to my heels forthwith.”

“They cannot resort to so cowardly an expedient?” returned Walther.

“Look and convince yourself, if you won’t believe me,” answered the tailor pettishly, “and surely, if you don’t value your own life, you will have some compassion on Justine?”

Walther now in turn took a hasty survey of the enemy’s operations, and then turning to

Hans, he said in a low voice, "You are right, it is time to fly, and whilst these men are engaged in their diabolical work, we shall have a chance of getting some distance up the mountain, before our absence is discovered. Take Fritz with you—Justine shall be my charge. May heaven speed us, for though the attempt is desperate, there is no alternative."

"Away then!" cried the tailor, and taking the hand of his dumb nephew, led him, at a quick pace, through the door that opened on to the sloping side of the mountain.

In obedience to Walther's command, his soldiers then departed, and last of all, he himself left the mill with Justine.

Not a word was spoken by either; but in that moment of danger, she clung to him, not with terror, but with a firm resolution that whatever might be the result she would not survive her lover. Hans, without once looking behind him, dragged Fritz up the rocks, with incredible rapidity, and the other men, mindful

only of their own safety, were speedily out of sight. But Walther and his companion were less fortunate. Hurried and agitated, Justine missed her footing on the slippery rocks, before they had ascended many steps of the rugged stair, and though by Walther's help she speedily pursued her way, yet several moments were lost by the accident, and they had scarcely ascended higher than the roof of the building, when Staffer's soldier, who at that moment came out a third time in search of faggots, unfortunately espied them.

Walther saw him, at the very moment he was himself observed, and their guns were simultaneously pointed and discharged. Both took effect. The Frenchman, grievously wounded, rolled backwards, with a heavy groan, down the cliff he had partly ascended, whilst his bullet pierced the leg of Walther Stanz, below the knee, and though it broke no bone, brought him at once to the ground.

The horror and consternation of Justine ex-

ceeded all bounds. She heard the man below, as soon as he recovered from the first stunning effects of his wound, calling loudly for his comrades, and she saw Walther lie bleeding before her, but she did not lose her presence of mind; the urgency of the danger seemed to endow her with a strength and courage beyond her sex, and quickly obeying the directions of her lover, who, though disabled for a time, was not insensible, she tore her apron into shreds, and bound it above his wound, so as to stop the effusion of blood. He then vainly intreated her to fly, and leave him to his fate; her resolution to share his destiny was not to be shaken.

“If we could gain that rock above,” he said, looking towards the bridge of the torrent, and attempting at the same time to arise, “there might yet be a chance of my keeping my pursuers at bay, till Lena comes with succour. One rifle would suffice to defend the only point by which that narrow ledge is accessible from the mill.”

"Lean on me then, dearest," returned Justine, and partly by her assistance, partly by the aid of a jutting point of the rock, he again raised himself on his feet.

The maiden supporting him on one side, and his rifle serving as a crutch on the other, with extreme difficulty he made his way up the remainder of the rocky stair, to the recess where he proposed to remain, but no sooner had he reached it, than, this exciting object of his wishes attained, all strength forsook him, and he fell to the ground in a deep swoon.

At that very moment, Staffer, Michael Graaf, and their followers, rushed from the cottage, in answer to the unceasing cries of their wounded comrade.

For a brief space Justine saw that he engaged the whole of their attention, and endeavouring to conceal herself and the prostrate form of Walther, behind the projecting rock, she indulged a transient hope that they might elude discovery. But brief indeed was this de-

lusion, for the wounded soldier below, thirsting for revenge, quickly pointed out her place of refuge to his comrades, and, with a loud shout, Staffer and half a dozen of his men instantly rushed up the mountain towards it.

Justine saw them, and felt that heaven alone could aid her. With a brief, but fervent prayer, she implored the aid of the Holy Mother, and then kneeling down by the side of Walther, that their fate might be decided together, she for the first time remembered what he had said about the possibility of defending the terrace with a single gun. The rifle that lay at his side, she knew to be unloaded, but there were pistols in his belt, and snatching one of these, with the last effort of despair, she took her stand at the narrowest point of the cliff, and with the weapon in her hand stood trembling from head to foot, yet resolved to discharge it at the first man who should attempt to pass her. The wild torrent dashing to an immeasurable depth beneath the frail pine bridge, with deafening

roar scattered its foam around her, moistening the narrow ledge half overhanging its waters, which Justine had made her fortress; on one side the mountain towered bare and perpendicular to the skies, on the other, like a swallow's nest on the face of the cliff, at fifty paces below her, was the mill, and beneath it, masses of clouds were flitting and veiling from the inhabitants of the valley of Goldau, the view of those high rocks and of the brightening sky.

The maiden marked not the terrific grandeur of the scene, but anxiously did she look abroad in search of succour, and with a feeling almost amounting to joy, she fancied, ere long, she could descry afar off, between the flitting mists, a party of moving figures on the hill.

But the danger of her position was too imminent for her attention to be diverted from it for more than a passing moment. When she again turned to watch the movements of Staffer, even these afforded some relief to her anxiety, for she saw that the farmer and his men, having,

in the blindness of their impetuosity, chosen a wrong path, they had speedily come to a point where further progress was impossible, and with loud execrations against their ill-fortune, were compelled to retrace their steps, and seek access to her place of refuge, by a more circuitous road. Yet still it was not by the stair up which she and Walther had ascended, and a possibility remained, that this second attempt might prove as unsuccessful as the first.

She saw his angry gestures, as he called impatiently on his soldiers to follow him, though the din of the torrent drowned his voice, but all were quickly lost to her sight behind a rugged projection of the mountain.

Still she kept her post, but she could not forbear from turning to gaze with deep anxiety on the prostrate form of her lover, who yet gave no sign of returning animation, and for a moment every thing else was forgotten in the wild despair, this sad spectacle awakened in her heart. The arm that held the pistol dropped

at her side, and she was about to rush towards him, when she was at once recalled to a full sense of the fearful duty it behoved her to perform, by the near sound of approaching steps, on a level with the very pass she had determined to defend.

The blood rushed wildly to her dizzy brain ; every object seemed to swim confusedly before her sight, till nothing was distinguishable, but the outline of a man, at a distance of not more than ten paces before her. Her hand shook convulsively, yet she raised the pistol with a feeling, that on that agnoizing effort, the life of Walther depended.

To take aim she was unable, but her finger was on the trigger, when with a cry that arose wildly above the voice of the waters, she recognized in the approaching enemy, the person of her uncle Michael Graaf.

Paralised with horror, the weapon dropt from her powerless hand, and sinking on her knees before him, on the brink of the cliff so

that her kneeling figure completely obstructed the pass, she had so fruitlessly resolved to defend, she implored his mercy for her lover, in impetuous and heart rending accents.

But the Treasurer was in no mood to be softened by such entreaties; all his former affection for the unfortunate girl seemed obliterated from his mind, by the discovery of the probable existence of his own long sought offspring; and highly irritated by her disobedience, and resolute adherence to the fortunes of Walther Stanz, he endeavoured almost fiercely to shake her from him.

“Ha ! Justine !” he cried, “can I believe my sight ; have I lived to see the child of my bounty point a pistol at my breast ? but it is a fit end of all your guilty courses, and worthy of your lawless paramour ! Off girl, I say, or by the Saints without a scruple I will dash you down that precipice, to instant death, if longer you presume, thus to obstruct my course !”

“I am not guilty,” she cried still clinging to

him, with a grasp, that the trembling fingers of the agitated old man, were utterly unable to unloose. "Neither I, nor Walther, ever sought to injure you, and I implore you, uncle, by the love you once bore me—"

"Peace viper," he exclaimed, "the ties of kindred are broken between us!"

"Yet hear me," she passionately returned with breathless energy, "Walther Stanz lies there, bleeding and insensible—none but cowards would seek to do him injury; yet Staffer and a savage band pursue him; you have influence with these men—they would spare him at your bidding, and I who when a child clung round your knees, implore you by those old remembrances to step between him and death!"

Michael Graaf, laughed aloud; but it was not a sound of mirth, and there was an expression in his piercing, bright grey eyes, as he gazed beyond her kneeling figure, that filled the heart of his suppliant with terror.

Then for the first time she heard a confused noise of voices and trampling feet, that in her wild agitation, she had not before distinguished amidst the roar of the rushing water. She started up ! wildly she turned to ascertain the cause of this new alarm, and beheld with agony indescribable, the insensible form of Walther, borne like a corpse along the trembling pine bridge, by Staffer and one of the most athletic of his men.

With the shriek of a maniac, she would have rushed towards them, but the arms of Michael Graaf were around her, and vainly did she struggle to escape.

"Ha, Justine," he said, with a sardonic smile, "it is now my turn. Staffer needs not your help, and as to my interfering with him that is out of the question, for he is only doing my work."

"Oh, uncle ! uncle ! as you hope for mercy let me loose !" cried the distracted girl, absolutely writhing with agony in his grasp, whilst

her tears ceased to flow, and the tide of life seemed utterly to have forsaken her pallid cheeks, and quivering lips. But the Treasurer was unmoved. "As you hope for mercy hereafter show it now," she murmured in piercing accents, that few could have resisted ; but Michael was obdurate; and in spite of all her alternate struggles, and entreaties, he continued to hold her there, whilst her lover was borne away before her sight, by his exulting captors.

"Foolish girl," said the Treasurer, when exhausted by her agony, she for a moment ceased to pour forth the wild expression of her despair, "you may yet see your precious Walther again, if that will console you, for to-morrow at noon he will mount a scaffold in the grand place at Lucerne, to pay, under the axe of the headsman, the forfeit of his many crimes!"

"It cannot—shall not be!" exclaimed Justine, again struggling to get free. "The Swiss are approaching. I see them beyond the mill, there is time to intercept him yet, and in defi-

ance of you, and all his enemies, Walther shall still be saved !”

In truth, as the maiden said, Aloys Reding and his party were now distinctly to be seen near the little pine grove, where Staffer and his men had first been descried by Walther on their approach to the cottage ; but though the countenance of Michael Graaf betrayed intense emotion, to the amazement of Justine, he appeared unconscious of the words she uttered, and never once moved his eyes to take note of the enemy, whose approach she so eagerly announced.

His gaze was fixed, as by a spell, on a little black wooden cross, suspended around her neck, which during the wild struggle between them, had been dragged into sight.

It was the trinket which Walther Stanz had sent her, by the hands of Father Paul, from the prison, when there confined, in consequence of the Treasurer’s accusations, and to which the

Hermit had assigned, when he delivered it, so mysterious a value.

She had worn it ever since, as a precious pledge of Walther's love, and when Michael, snatching it with trembling fingers, surveyed with eager scrutiny the rude initials engraved upon it, she forgot her surprise at this strange movement, in her anxiety to guard her treasure.

Little did she know that it had once been a love token from Michael himself, to the unfortunate Clarice, who on her death bed had hung it around the neck of her child. But the Treasurer had not forgotten it, and no sooner had the letters on the centre assured him beyond the shadow of a doubt of its identity, than he demanded in a voice of intense emotion, how his niece had become possessed of the trinket.

"It was the gift of Walther Stanz," she said, with a vague hope that some good might thence arise.

"You had it from Walther Stanz, say you? and where did he obtain it?"

"It was his mother's," was the reply of Justine, and utter was her amazement, at the emotion these few simple words excited in her listener.

"Whose mother! Walther's mother? girl know you what you say? the shepherdess could give him no such trinket!" he returned with breathless rapidity.

"Ask Father Paul!" she rejoined.

"Ask Father Paul! that is the echo that mocks me at every turning of my troubled destiny!" he cried.

"The Hermit told me when he brought it me," said the maiden eagerly, "that Walther's fate might one day be decided by that trinket."

"Ha, said he this!" cried Graaf, wildly grasping her arm, "it was his mother's gift, and Father Paul hath been a guardian to this youth! Oh! heaven what thoughts now break upon my brain. I see it all. It is clear as day;

the Hermit's love, this cross, the young man's age—nay, when I think on it, his features too—it must be so. Oh, madman, fool, idiot, why was I blind till now! my child—my long lost son, in my rash vengeance I have murdered thee! But on Father Paul's head be the guilt, oh God, and not on mine! His base deceptions have wrought all this misery!”

“What do I hear! Walther your son!” exclaimed Justine, whom her uncle no longer detained. “If these wild words are true, why lose the moments thus? I can already distinguish Father Paul amongst the approaching band. Away—away—tell him all, for he is Walther's friend, and Staffer, fearless of pursuit, may yet be overtaken.”

Michael made no reply; the tumult of his thoughts was too great for words, but though he appeared unconscious that Justine had spoken, with incredible celerity he obeyed her suggestion, and even animated as she was by

hope and anxiety, she had great difficulty in keeping pace with him, as they descended to the scene of the recent conflict. All the dread of exposure that had haunted him for years, was then forgotten, in the hope to save his child, and the deep pangs of conscience, as he remembered the injuries he had heaped upon him.

Aloys Reding and his party were in the meantime advancing thither with almost equal speed; the silence and solitude of the place became every moment more manifest, as they drew nigh the mill, and had filled their minds with serious apprehensions, when Michael Graaf, followed by Justine, rushed through the cottage unexpectedly towards them. The surprise and dismay of Aloys Reding, Father Paul, and Lena, were great beyond measure, and with one voice they eagerly demanded tidings of Walther.

"He is in the hands of the French," cried Michael in hurried accents, ere Justine could

reply. "At my instigation they have made him prisoner; but, Aloys Reding, I suspected not then he was my own son, nor your nephew; by a strange accident I have since discovered this fearful secret, of which Father Paul has long been in possession, yet cruelly withheld, and if Walther falls the sacrifice, let his blood be upon his head. I dare him to deny the truth of what I say."

"Denial would be vain," was the General's reply, whilst he kept his scrutinizing eyes fixed on the face of the Hermit, "the confession of Louis Brentano has already placed the fact beyond dispute."

"And I can swear that he is no child of mine," said Lena in a low voice.

"Let it now suffice that Walther is in danger!" cried Father Paul, who with surprise but no consternation, had listened to these successive declarations. "I swore to his mother never to reveal his birth, till Michael Graaf, the husband who had deserted her and his child,

held his life in his hands. That hour has come, and let our only thought be now to rescue him."

The Treasurer answered not a syllable; his eager desire to rescue his child from death, had power to curb even the bitter hatred and indignation against the Hermit, that swelled his breast, and to check the torrent of fiery invective that arose to his lips.

But even when for his own purposes he thus suppressed his wrath, he resolved, in the recesses of his heart, to take full and speedy revenge on the Hermit for all he had made him suffer, never once remembering that Father Paul had only sinned against him by faithfully performing the wishes of Clarice, and that all his misery was the result of his own evil conduct, the consequence of the avarice, and vain desire of empty reputation, to which he had sacrificed through life, every better feeling.

His countenance sufficiently betrayed to the Hermit this bitter enmity, and he well knew

that to leave Walther to the fate his wretched parent had prepared for him, would be the keenest vengeance the most refined malice could inflict upon Michael Graaf, but he felt that the pangs of conscience, the agony of suspense, and the mortification that then distracted the heart of this wretched being, were sufficient punishment for even his long course of crime, and with heart and soul he lent his utmost efforts to rescue the noble youth from destruction, who, though the child of his bitterest enemy, had long been the single object of his own devoted love. Aloys Reding was scarcely less interested in his nephew's safety, and by his command, the pursuit was rapidly commenced.

Staffer's party was still visible, winding slowly down the mountain, and one of the General's soldiers, who was well acquainted with the district, offered to point out a nearer path, by which, under cover of the brushwood, their flank might be speedily turned, and their re-

treat to the French camp intercepted, without their even suspecting the proximity of an enemy.

The agony of Justine, during the brief time occupied by these arrangements, was intense; every instant's delay seemed fraught with death to her beloved Walther, and no persuasions could induce either her, or Lena, to remain behind when the party resumed its march. But Aloys Reding and Father Paul, fearing that, notwithstanding the interference of Graaf, there was little chance of liberating Walther without a skirmish with his captors, insisted on their remaining in the rear; and when the soldiers, at the call of their leader, leapt at full speed from rock to rock, and rushed through the thickets without any regard to a beaten path, the anxious women, in spite of their utmost efforts, were left far behind.

It was then the poor Shepherdess eagerly inquired the fate of Fritz, her own, her much loved child; but when she heard he had fled in

company with her brother Hans, the fears of the poor mother were at rest, and her whole thoughts directed to Walther, who was little less dear to her; and rejoicing in the discovery of his parentage, by which his future prosperity appeared secured, she scarcely entertained a fear that his friends would fail in releasing him from captivity. But Justine was less sanguine. Completely exhausted by the dangers and excitement of the past night, her usually buoyant heart seemed to have lost all power to hope, and scarcely aware of the consolation her companion proffered, she continued her way in silence, seldom turning her eyes from that part of the landscape, where the troop of Staffer successively appeared and vanished, amidst the scattered copse and undulating ground.

Very rarely could she catch a glimpse of their pursuers, who soon far outstripped the Shepherdess and herself; but with unwearied zeal Aloys Reding and his followers continued their march, whilst Staffer, on the contrary,

unsuspicious of an enemy, and momentarily expecting Michael Graaf to overtake him with Justine, descended to the valley at a leisurely pace.

CHAPTER XIV.

The smile, or frown of awful Heaven,
To virtue or to vice is given.

BYRON.

Serene will be our days, and bright
And happy will our nature be,
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And bless are they who in the main
This faith, even now, do entertain.

WORDSWORTH.

WHEN Walther recovered from his swoon, he was amazed to find himself borne along on a rude litter by two stout soldiers, but when his wandering gaze fell upon Staffer, he at once understood his position. He cast another anxious glance to see that Justine was not likewise a prisoner, and without a question, or murmur he again closed his eyes. Weakened by loss

of blood, he was scarcely capable of any distinct train of thought, yet still he was conscious of his danger, that he was in the power of his enemies—that he was parted for ever from Justine, and he prayed in heart both for her, and for himself. Sometimes shadows of the past flitted before him, beautiful and enchanting; he fancied he was again with the maiden, in his little boat on the Lake of Lucerne, as on that glorious day when he won the first confession of her love; then darker dreams appeared; the threats of Michael Graaf rang in his ears; the scaffold and the executioner stood prepared for his death, and he felt with an agony, that, like the night-mare stopped the pulses of his heart, there were no more hours of joy in store for him.

Little did he imagine when thus yielding to despair, that Aloys Reding and Father Paul, with a stout troop of soldiers at their back, were at that moment scarcely a hundred paces distant, having already turned the flank of his

captors. But, enfeebled as he was, he entertained not the most remote hope of a rescue, and his surprise equalled that of Staffer himself, when, on advancing beyond the corner of a long stone wall, he perceived that the progress of his escort was interrupted, by a body of fighting men, gathered around the banner of Schwytz, who stood compactly drawn up in front of them, upon a rising ground, between a torrent and a morass, evidently determined to dispute the passage of the stream.

Eagerly did he arise on his rude bier, to gain a more distinct view of these unexpected assailants, and with a wild cry of exultation, which he could not suppress, he recognised Aloys Reding and the Hermit.

There was a momentary pause. Neither party seemed to know how to begin the attack which both meditated. Staffer, taken by surprise, had not that ready wit that decides at a glance on the best means of extrication from an unforeseen difficulty, and Aloys Reding, influ-

enced by his own feelings, as well as the entreaties of Father Paul and Michael Graaf, who kept close at his side, was unwilling to endanger the life of Walther, by firing on the enemies who surrounded him.

“Staffer only made him a prisoner by my desire,” said the Treasurer eagerly. “I engaged to give him gold for his capture, and I will offer to pay him twice the sum, for his release. Tarry here for five minutes, whilst I go forward, and arrange this matter, and there will be no need to fire a gun.”

Though, from the well known character of Michael Graaf, all who heard him, especially Father Paul, greatly mistrusted his sincerity in this proposition, yet it was deemed advisable to accept it, as the General, conscious of his superior numbers and the advantages of his position, thought he might set even treachery at defiance.

But ere the Treasurer had advanced many steps from the ranks of the Swiss, who stood

with fixed bayonets ready for a charge, he caught a view of the recumbent figure of Walther, and forgetting every thing but his long lost child, he rushed forward with a wild and piercing cry.

At that moment, Staffer having recovered his presence of mind, and given the word of command, the whole body of his men fired in one volley upon their opponents.

“The distance was too great for many of their shots to take effect, but one bullet did the work of death unerringly, and Michael Graaf, ere he had advanced five paces down the hill, fell mortally wounded.

“My son—my son—let him forgive me before I die,” was the wild exclamation that reached the ears of Father Paul, as the wretched man writhed for a moment convulsively on the ground.

He saw him raise himself, and stretch his arms with a wailing cry towards Walther. It was the last effort of departing life; in another

moment he fell back, and expired without a groan.

All this passed so rapidly, that the echoes of the guns had not yet died away, when the Swiss soldiers like a torrent passed over the prostrate body, and rushed with fixed bayonets, at full speed, against the enemy.

The velocity of their movement, redoubled the weight of their charge. Staffer and his party utterly unable to stand against it, gave way on every point of their line. Some fled—some threw down their arms, and implored for mercy, others leaping into the torrent, were swept away by the wild waters, like a leaf, or a feather on the stream.

Staffer was amongst the latter number; he relied on his athletic form, which had often in the chase successfully buffeted the mountain streams, and he struggled manfully to gain the opposite banks, diving at times to escape the bullets which were perpetually whizzing above his head.

But encumbered by his arms, he made little way against the force of the current, and he had with extreme difficulty waded to the middle of the stream, where the water nearly reached his shoulder, when his foot slipped upon a slanting stone, and he fell headlong amidst the turbid waters, that with furious velocity were roaring and rushing around him. His hand was once visible, endeavouring to snatch a bough that over-hung the flood, but the attempt was vain, and the body of the mountaineer was swept down like the fragments of his native hills, to lie for ever under the deep waters of the lake, forgotten and unlamented.

“ Father Paul, who unarmed bore no part in that fierce struggle for life and death, yet plunged fearlessly amidst the thickest of the fray, where Walther, cast upon the ground by his affrighted guards, and exposed without any means of defence to all the dangers of the conflict, was watching with intense anxiety the progress of the battle.

With a joyful exclamation he welcomed the Hermit, and then in hurried accents, forgetful of his own danger, he eagerly inquired for Justine.

“She is safe and well, my son,” he replied, “and you must now think of yourself. Make an effort, if you can, and get out of reach of the bullets—for here you are every moment in danger of being trodden to death by the combatants.”

“It is maddening to look on, without power to bear a part in the fray,” was the young man’s sole reply.

“You have done your duty nobly before now,” said the Hermit, “and let that console you. There are others here now, to do the work.”

Then assisting him to arise, Father Paul led his wounded and beloved pupil, from that exposed and dangerous position, behind the shelter of an orchard wall, whence they could

watch the movements of their friends, yet be themselves exempt from danger.

A very short time elapsed, till the battle was decided in favour of the Swiss ; and whilst Aloys Reding, with his men, disappeared down the valley in pursuit of the fugitives, Walther eagerly requested from the Hermit a narrative of all that had occurred since he fell insensible by the side of Justine.

The story ending with the death of Michael Graaf, was quickly told, but the amazement of the young man was extreme, when Father Paul, after adding in an agitated and solemn manner, that he had tidings of much deeper import to disclose, proceeded to recount the whole particulars of his birth—his own reasons for his long concealment of his pupil's relationship to the unprincipled Treasurer—Michael Graaf's recognition of Justine's cross, and the important testimony of Louis Brentano, which Aloys Reding had recently communicated to him on their march.

It was one of those wild and extraordinary tales, bordering on the limits of romance, yet such was the sacred character of him who recounted it, that Walther could not hesitate for a moment to receive it as truth, even though his heart shrunk from acknowledging Michael Graaf as a father, whom he had so long had reason to regard, as the most unprincipled of men, and his own most bitter enemy.

Nevertheless, he felt with proud satisfaction, that he was no longer one of that subservient class, to whom all share in the government and honours of his country was denied, but a freeman by birth, and one with whom the kindred of Justine could not esteem her alliance a degradation.

But his heart was most deeply touched by the anxiety of Father Paul, lest his affection should be estranged by the discovery of the imposition he had practised on him, and the unyielding resolution with which he had maintained his promise to Clarice, even when he

saw how much the happiness of her child was affected by the mortifying persuasion, that he was the child of a bondman.

“ You had pledged your word,” said Walther, clasping the hand of the old man with fervent gratitude in his, “ and to have betrayed the trust my mother reposed in you, would have been a weakness, nay, a crime, unworthy of a pious and lofty minded man, like Father Paul. No! You have been a guardian, and protector to me, when no other friendly hand was stretched out to guide, or save, and I should indeed prove myself unworthy of all the care you have bestowed in directing my mind, to high and holy things, did I ever cease to regard you during the whole progress of my future life, with the utmost gratitude and filial love.”

“ My son! my son!” cried the agitated old man, as tears streamed down his furrowed cheeks, “ now are the prayers of long years fulfilled, and I can stand before the spirit of

your sainted mother in heaven, without sorrow, and without shame, for I have trained her child, to be worthy to rejoin her there. Again and again has she appeared to me, in the darkness of night, to cheer me amidst my anxious task, but now the work is done—I have fulfilled my duty, and heaven has vouchsafed to reward my labour, by your virtue, and to bless me with your love.”

Further discourse was here interrupted by the return of Aloys Reding, and many of his followers, announcing the total dispersion of the enemy.

With infinite exultation the patriot General clasped his newly discovered nephew in his arms, and expressing his fervent admiration of all he had hitherto known of his character and conduct, he declared his resolution, not only to acknowledge him as his sister's son, but to adopt him thenceforward as his own.

Walther expressed his gratitude in fitting language, and when Justine, and Lena, at length arrived to witness the prosperous ter-

mination of events, that had so recently appeared fraught with inevitable calamity, the happiness of all assembled was complete.

The wound of Walther was the only shadow upon the general joy; but Justine's apprehensions were speedily allayed by Father Paul, who pronounced that though painful, it was not likely to afford him any lasting inconvenience.

As Aloys Reding was anxious to return to the camp, he then proposed that if his nephew could bear removal, he should be conveyed thither with all speed. Walther at once declared his readiness to comply with his wishes, but begged that the body of Michael Graaf might first be interred by Father Paul, according to the rites of the church, in the burying ground of the village, near which the wretched man had fallen a sacrifice to his own unprincipled machinations.

Even the General himself, though he indignantly resented his sister's wrongs, could not refuse his consent to a proposition so worthy of

him who urged it ; but anxious for the public safety to return with all speed to his quarters, he stated his own inability to attend the ceremony. Leaving four of his men to dig the grave and assist in removing the body, he then took a hasty farewell of his friends, and turned his steps towards the army.

The corpse of the Treasurer was laid without a coffin in the grave, but though none sorrowed above his remains, a profound and impressive solemnity was observed in the celebration of the holy rites which sanctified his interment, and a deep conviction was felt by all who witnessed it, and knew the story of the erring man, that heaven has appointed, even on earth, a just retribution for the sinner.

By an apparent fatality, the accomplishment of Michael Graaf's most dearly cherished wish, had proved the proximate cause of his own death, and though his son could shed no tear for his loss, he was the first to throw earth into his grave.

This sad task performed, Walther was speedi-

ly conveyed by his comrades to the head quarters of the Swiss army, which, followed by Justine and Lena, they reached in safety before noon.

The Shepherdess found, with delight, that Fritz and Hans had arrived there before her, and the little tailor, though greatly amazed by the discovery of Walther's parentage, protested it was a thing he had always suspected from the beginning.

Aloys Reding, on his return, had immediately assigned a cottage near his own, for the accommodation of his nephew and his friends, and there, after their recent anxiety and fatigue, they gladly found refreshment and repose.

But though the private interests of Father Paul came to so prosperous a conclusion, both he and Aloys Reding saw with deep regret, that the affairs of their country wore a less promising aspect.

The arms of the Democratic Cantons had proved every where successful against their invaders, but the strength of this pastoral

people was exhausted, even by their victories, though in the councils that were subsequently held, many of the most daring and reckless of the patriots, were desirous of prolonging their resistance to the French, as long as a man remained alive capable of bearing arms, others moved by the misery of their wives and children, or weary of beholding the sufferings and deprivations to which thousands of their fellow creatures were reduced, and well aware that every hour of protracted warfare, would only multiply the ravages of famine and disease, without affording the remotest chance of ultimate success, boldly talked of acceding to the terms of peace which had been proffered by their invaders.

Father Paul himself was too wise a man to advocate resistance, when experience made it evident, that resistance could no longer benefit his country, and influenced by his advice, Aloys Reding called a general assembly two days after the battle of Morgarten, to discuss the question. Turbulent and agitated, it was on the point

of ending in bloodshed, but a large majority finally decided in favour of the terms offered by the French, which guaranteed to the Democratic Cantons, the free exercise of their religion, and the possession of their arms, provided they accepted the new Helvetic constitution.

The peace was signed on the following day, but it was long till that beautiful country recovered from the ravages of that unjustifiable invasion, or was restored to the pastoral tranquillity it had for centuries before enjoyed.

Its valleys and its mountains were again trodden by successive armies, during the endless wars of Buonaparte, but these events had little influence on the fortunes of those whose history it has been our task to recount.

They did not again take a part in any of the wars that afterwards harassed their country. During the peace that Lucerne and Schwytz for a time enjoyed, after they had acceded to the dictation of the French Directory, Walther being duly acknowledged by his maternal uncle,

Aloys Reding, as the legitimate son of his sister and the deceased Treasurer, Michael Graaf, succeeded in recovering a considerable portion of his landed property, though much of his wealth placed out on credit was irretrievably lost. But he regretted it not. Justine soon afterwards became his wife, and no wealth was necessary to increase the happiness of this single hearted creature, who with unchanging affection had clung to him in sorrow and adversity, when the shadows of misfortune that darkened his early path were dispelled, and the blessing of the church had indissolubly united them.

The heavy trials she had undergone were never to be forgotten, but like an evil dream whose recollection saddens, without paining the heart, they were only remembered to enhance by their contrast, the value of the peaceful happiness which during the remainder of her life, requited her constancy and her love.

Father Paul pronounced the marriage benediction above the heads of Walther and Jus-

time, and then contentedly returned to the cavern of the waterfall, to await with resignation his summons to eternity.

The pride of Hans Brunk was somewhat hurt, that he could no longer claim Walther as his nephew; yet his mortification was considerably soothed, by the presents he received at the wedding, and the periodical visits he continued afterwards to pay to the young couple at their farm on the Righi, where hospitality and abundance ever welcomed him.

The cottage of Lena was rebuilt by her affectionate foster-child, who never forgot, amidst his altered fortune, that in the helpless years of childhood, she had supplied to him the place of a mother, and by that endearing appellation he continued to address her, till her dying day.

Though the Shepherdess was deeply grateful for the continued kindness with which Walther and Justine administered to all her wants, she was yet more so, that they treated her poor dumb Fritz with the regard of a brother and sister, and when her simple life at length came

to a close, death was divested of its only pang, by the assurance that their tender care would supply her loss to the helpless object of her love.

As Aloys Reding became better acquainted with the virtues of Justine and her noble minded husband, his attachment to them increased; his visits to their fireside were long and frequent, till finally, tired of his solitary home, and weary of traversing the distance that divided them, he took up his constant abode in their dwelling, and as their children grew up around him, in health and beauty, he ceased to lament that he had none to call him father. To the cavern of the Hermit, his ancient and long tried friend, he frequently resorted, to hold converse with him on those high and holy subjects, so deeply interesting to those, who with a pious spirit are drawing near the grave, and to both, this intercourse was a source of pleasure and of good.

For long Father Paul betrayed no symptoms of decay, and in daily communion with Walther

and his family, he led a happier life than he had ever done since childhood.

But time, though imperceptibly, still did its work, and to the deep grief of Walther, when after a lapse of years, he paid his usual visit to the cave at the dawn of a bright summer's day, he found the old man lying helpless, and almost speechless, on his humble pallet.

But he evidently still knew his pupil, and his eyes brightened with pleasure, as he drew nigh. One hand lay tightly closed upon his breast, and with the other he grasped that of Walther with convulsive emotion.

The young man knelt down with a crucifix at his side, and joined in the prayer he indistinctly murmured. Father Paul in almost unintelligible accents, then gave him his blessing. Walther's eyes streamed with tears as he bowed to receive it, and with deep anxiety when this was over, he still bent forward to catch the meaning of the words, he continued at intervals to utter.

"Bright spirit," he heard him say, whilst

he gazed intently on the sunbeam which fell within the cave, "art thou sent at length to summon me! I come Clarice, I come!"

A smile of ineffable joy played round the withered lips of the Hermit, as he uttered these words, clearly and distinctly. The next moment he lay cold and lifeless on his pallet. The spirit had departed to its eternal home.

When the corpse was straightened for interment, there was found tightly grasped in the hand, that still rested on the heart, a long, dark tress of female hair, but though Walther knew it was his mother's, he left it to be laid in the grave of Father Paul.

During the brief period of the French invasion, Walther had earned for himself an honest fame, and had experienced that in the wild tumult of human affairs, there is no charm, as he had once imagined, to appease the restless longings of an aspiring spirit, or confer that content which the mind can no where find, but in itself. He felt that his desire of perfection

could only be fulfilled in heaven, and had alone been implanted in his heart by a beneficent creator, as a guide to lead him thither. No longer an isolated being, but blessed with a fair wife, and children springing like blossoms around him, with long tried friends, and numerous dependants, he was convinced that earthly happiness is alone to be found in the exercise of our best affections, the zealous performance of our duties, and devout submission to the divine will.

In these he was never found wanting. Industrious, wise, benevolent and contented, his heart was centered in his mountain home, and the influence of his benignant spirit, even in that seclusion, became the means of good to many—training them to heaven, and teaching them how best to use the gift of life.

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T. C. Newby, Printer, Angel Hill, Bury.











